

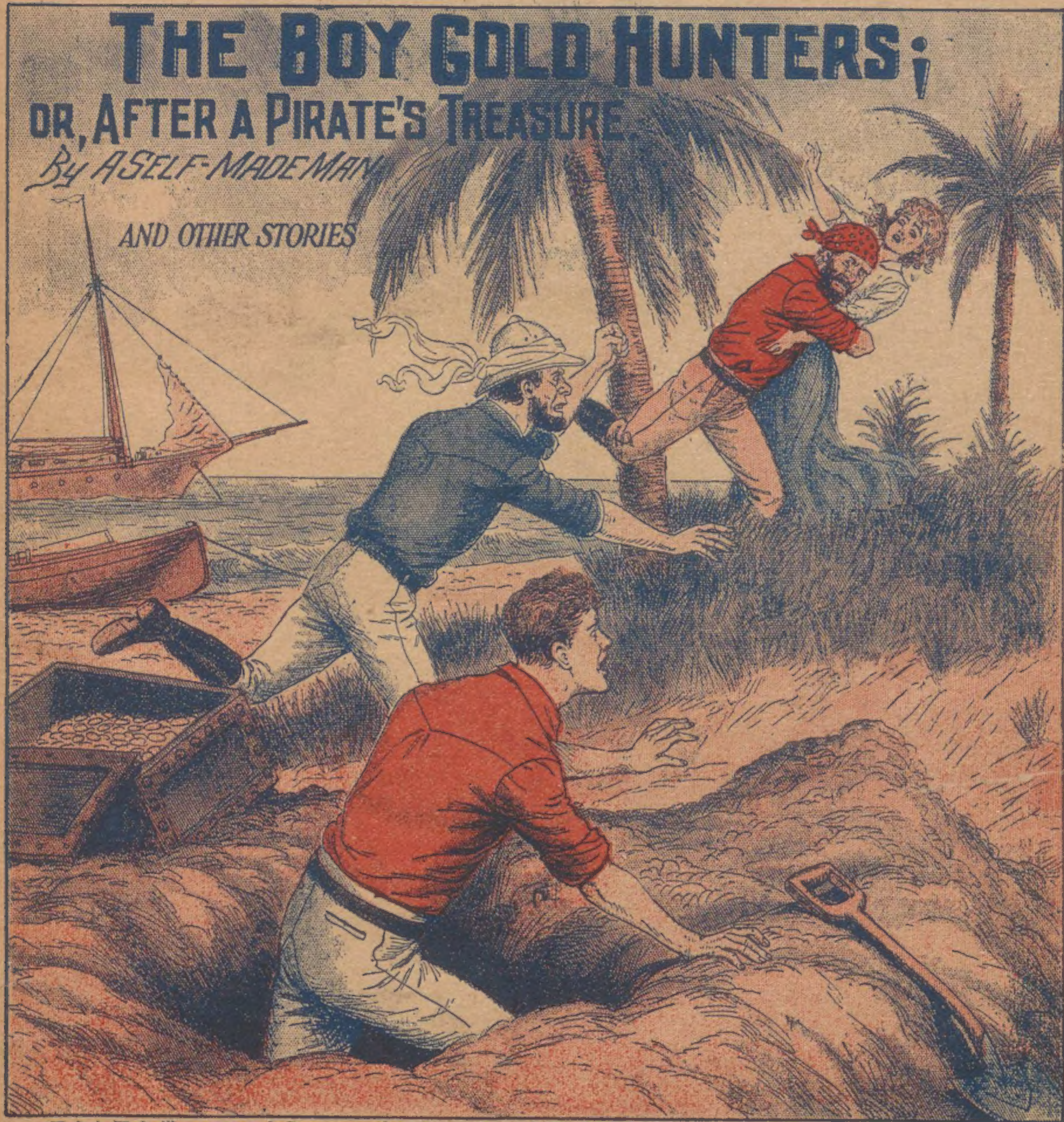
FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

THE BOY GOLD HUNTERS; OR, AFTER A PIRATE'S TREASURE.

By A SELF-MADE MAN

AND OTHER STORIES



"Help! Help!" screamed Grace as Quassamodo, seizing her in his arms, started for the underbrush.

"Drop her, you thafe of the wurruld!" roared McSwiggle, dashing after the negro.

The girl's screams brought Jack out of the hold in short order.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

Issued weekly—Subscription price, \$4.00 per year! Canada, \$4.50; Foreign, \$5.00. Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, inc., 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second-Class Matter, October 4, 1911, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

No. 1033

NEW YORK, JULY 17, 1925

Price 8 Cents.

The Boy Gold Hunters

OR, AFTER A PIRATE'S TREASURE

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—Introduces Jack Ashmore and Bob Oakley.

"Hello, Jack! Going round for orders?" asked Bob Oakley, pausing in front of his particular friend, Jack Ashmore. They were on the principal street of the little, old-fashioned seaport of Clifton, on the coast of Massachusetts. Jack shook his head gloomily.

"No? What makes you look so glum this morning?" went on Bob.

"I'm out of a job," replied Jack.

"Out of a job? How is that?" said Bob, in some surprise.

"Mr. Anderson has sold out the store."

"Who bought him out?"

"Eben Peckham."

"And wouldn't Mr. Peckham keep you on?"

"No. He's got a son who has stepped into my shoes."

"Well, what are you going to do?"

"Hunt for another job."

"Would you like to work for Nat Peaseley?"

"The boatbuilder?"

"Yes. He wants a helper. You know a whole lot about boats, anyway, maybe the job would suit you."

"I'd just as soon work for Mr. Peaseley as not. You are sure he wants a helper?"

"Yes. The young chap he has is going to leave to-morrow, and I heard Nat say yesterday that he would like to have a clever boy to take his place."

"I'll go right over to his place and see him," said Jack, brightening up.

"And I'll go with you," said Bob. "He won't want you to-day, at any rate. Maybe we can borrow one of his boats and take a sail out to the North Shoals, where the wreck of the Spanish bark lies that went ashore there this spring. I'd like to see the craft. I've heard several boatmen, who visited her, say that she's an odd kind of vessel—something out of the common. Everybody aboard of her was lost except a big, burly negro, a native West Indian, who says his name is Quassamodo. He's been hanging around the Sailor's Rest saloon ever since, doing odd jobs for his board and lodging. A funny thing about him is that he goes out to the wreck nearly every

day. What the deuce takes him out there is a mystery. He claims he goes fishing. Sometimes he returns with a mess of fish, but mostly he doesn't."

"I've seen the chap. He came into the store one day and bought a fishing line, a sinker, some fair-sized hooks, a small hatchet and some other tools. Mr. Anderson waited on him. I noticed that he wore a red handkerchief with big white spots around his head under his hat, that he was large and strong, and altogether looked a good bit different from other negroes I've seen."

"That's right. Did you notice that he looks uncommonly fierce about the eyes? I wouldn't want to have a run-in with him."

"Yes, I saw his eyes. They are bad ones."

While the boys were talking they were walking down toward the water-front of the little village, which was only the big, nubby end of a long point of land, pounded on the easterly side by the waves of the Atlantic and washed on the westerly side by the waters of Boston harbor. Looking across the low, intervening stretch of land to the ocean they could see the North Shoals about three miles away, like a mere speck on the broad, blue surface of the water. Nat Peaseley, the boatbuilder, lived in a cozy little cottage close to his shop, the door of which overlooked a small dock. The boys passed the cottage and made straight for the shop, whence issued the sounds of hammering and scraping. The tide was coming in, bringing to the shore many little waves that flashed in the sunlight as if they wanted to make the boatbuilder's dock as beautiful a place as possible. When the boys darkened the doorway Mr. Peaseley was making the chips fly from a short, thick piece of oak that was screwed tight in a vise attached to his workbench. His assistant was engaged on the frame of a good-sized dory that was on the stocks. The boatbuilder was acquainted with both of the boys, in fact had known them ever since they were big enough to venture outside their homes alone. He knew that Bob Oakley lived in one of the best cottages of the village; that his father was cashier in an East Boston bank and drove every weekday morning to Winthrop and took a train there for the city, returning again late in the afternoon, and that Bob himself attended

the Winthrop High School, but was now at liberty to enjoy the mid-summer vacation that had just set in.

"Good-morning, Mr. Peaseley," said Bob. "I see you're busy as usual."

"Yes, I manage to find something to do most of the time, especially at this season of the year," responded the boatbuilder. "Hello, Jack!" looking at Ashmore, "it isn't often you get away from the store on a weekday mornin'."

"No, sir," replied the boy. "It isn't my fault that I'm away from it today, but the fact is I'm not working there any more."

"Not working there any more!" repeated the boatbuilder, in surprise, stopping work and regarding the boy with some curiosity. "Have you left Mr. Anderson?"

"Not exactly. Mr. Anderson sold out to Eben Peckham yesterday and my services are not required any more."

"Oh, that's it. Are you looking for another job?"

"Yes, sir. Bob told me that your assistant is going to leave you and I thought I'd ask you to give me a chance here."

"Think you would like to learn the business?"

"Yes, sir?"

"All right. I'll take you on. John will wind up here tomorrow. You can start in bright and early Monday morning."

"Thank you, sir," replied Jack, with a pleased look.

"And, Jack, I think you'd better move your traps to the cottage. Mrs. Peaseley has a spare room in the attic that you can have. It's rather rough and unfinished, but I reckon you'll find it as comfortable as the one you have. I sha'n't charge you anything for it, and your board won't be so much, that'll leave you something to clothe yourself with, and for pocket money."

"You're very kind, Mr. Peaseley," replied Jack, for the first time feeling glad that he had been obliged to cut loose from the store, which was not particularly congenial work to him. "I shall be glad to come and live with you."

"And we'll be glad to have you come," replied the boat builder, cordially. "It is only the other day that Mrs. Peaseley remarked——"

What he was about to say was cut short by the appearance of Mrs. Peaseley herself, a pleasant-faced little woman of five-and-forty, at the door.

"Come in, Cynthia," said her husband. "There's room enough for one more."

The lady nodded to the boys, whom she knew well, for everybody knew almost everybody else in Clifton, and walked in. When Mrs. Peaseley had delivered her message to her husband, Mr. Peaseley surprised her with the news that Jack Ashmore was coming to work for him on the following Monday.

"And he's going to take that room in the attic and board with us if you haven't any objection, Cynthia," added the boatbuilder.

"Objection? Of course not," replied the lady, cheerfully. "I'll be real glad to have you come, Jack. I'll treat you just as if you were our own son."

"Thank you, Mrs. Peaseley," said Jack, gratefully.

Mrs. Peaseley went back to the cottage and the boys went outside and sat down on a couple of blocks of wood.

"You'll have two days, besides Sunday, to yourself, Jack," said Bob. "We can go over to the North Shoals today, and up to Boston tomorrow if you say so."

"I'm willing," replied Jack.

"Go in and ask Mr. Peaseley if we can have the use of his catboat this afternoon and tomorrow. You can tell him where we're going. You can come up to my house and have lunch before we start."

Jack rose to do his companion's bidding, but had only taken a couple of steps when Bob called him back.

"Look yonder," pointed Bob. "There goes that nigger Quassamodo in Tom Brown's sailboat. He's bound for the North Shoals as sure as anything, and is liable to remain there all afternoon. I guess we won't go there today. We can start out early in the morning, instead. We'll go to Boston today and we'll start right away. I'll treat to lunch when we get there."

Jack easily prevailed on Mr. Peaseley to let them have his boat for a trip to the city, and fifteen minutes later they were spinning over the waves, bound westward.

CHAPTER II.—The Treasure Chart.

Right after breakfast next morning Bob Oakley appeared at Jack's lodgings and helped him carry his trunk and other belongings down to the boatbuilder's cottage. His new home looked bright and cheerful in the early morning sunshine. It was a story-and-a-half cottage. Over the front door was a trellis that the vines of a honeysuckle had mounted. At the windows of the kitchen stood rows of geraniums in luxuriant bloom, while the little garden was fairly alive with blossoms. Jack was delighted with the idea of living there, thinking he should be perfectly happy from that time out; but then he didn't know what was before him. Neither he nor Bob guessed, as they sailed from the boatbuilder's little dock for the North Shoals an hour later, that they were taking their last look at dear old Clifton for many a day. As they approached the shoals the bows of the derelict came into view. She had run clean up on the rocks and her stern was also exposed at low tide. A big red-and-black-striped buoy was anchored at either end of the shoals. They were known as bell-buoys, for a bell was suspended at the top of each. When the wind blew a stiff breeze, and the water was agitated about the shoal, the heavy clappers swung to and fro with the nodding of the buoys and sent forth a hoarse and melancholy knell. Their notes of warning, however had not saved the Spanish brig. She went on North Shoals in a dense fog late one spring afternoon, and there she had stuck ever since.

Jack steered the Sunbeam, which was the name of Mr. Peaseley's old catboat, with due caution through the intricate navigation of the shoal, and they soon glided up alongside the wreck. They didn't take the trouble to lower the sail, as that wasn't necessary, and while Jack held the

boat close to the derelict's side by grasping one of the many ropes that dangled over the fractured bulwark. Bob sprang aboard with the painter and secured it to a ring-bolt. Then Jack jumped on board himself, and the boys proceeded to survey the brig. After they had satisfied their curiosity on deck they went down into the cabin, for the tide was low and the water had receded, leaving a dank, seaweedy smell behind. The doors of the different box-like state-rooms stood wide open, the larger one, standing directly abaft, having without doubt been the captain's.

"I'll bet the reason why that darky comes here is to pick up such odds and ends of value that he knew lay about," said Bob.

"Don't you believe it. This brig was cleaned out long ago, either by the negro during his first trips, or by the boatmen and fishermen of Clifton. This wreck has been here nearly four months. You don't suppose anything of value would last as long as that."

"That's so," admitted Bob. "I wonder what brings him here, then?"

"Are you positive that he comes here?"

"The fishermen have repeatedly seen him aboard the wreck."

They went forward and descended into the quarters once used by the dead crew. The short pair of steps was still in its place, and down this they tripped. The air of the "sailors' parlor" was altogether different from that of the cabin, because it stood high and dry above the highest tide. Every bunk in the place had been demolished clean and clear, as if done on purpose, and the wood which they had been composed of lay in disordered fragments against the bulkhead that separated the fo'k'sle from the hold proper.

"Looks as if some one has been amusing himself here with a hatchet," remarked Bob. "Must have been Quassamodo, though what fun he could find in it is beyond me."

"Look at the heel of the bowsprit, Bob. That's been hacked away as though some one wanted to see what it was made of," said Jack.

"Or to find out if it was hollow," added Bob.

"Here's the hatchet and chisel that did the work, lying among the chips. They came from Mr. Anderson's store, so it must be the negro who has been using them, for he bought the identical articles there, as I believe I told you yesterday."

"He must have an object in all this," said Bob, scratching his head.

"Probably, but I'm not going to worry my brains trying to study it out."

Jack picked up the hatchet and looked at it with a critical eye.

"It's been subjected to hard usage," he said. "The edge is almost turned. I wonder if I could make it stick in that foremast yonder if I was to throw it tomahawk fashion?"

"Why don't you try it. I'll be you can't even hit the mast."

"How much will you bet?"

"A dime."

"I'll take you up, but I want three trials."

"You can have them, but you must strike the mast with the steel part of the hatchet or it doesn't count."

"I'll agree to that. Put up your dime."

Bob fished one out of his pocket and Jack covered it with a similar coin.

"This will be just like finding a dime," grinned Bob.

"Don't be so sure of that," retorted Jack, preparing to take aim at the mast. "I've got a sharp eye."

"I'll bet it isn't sharp enough to cut soft butter," chuckled Bob.

"It's sharp enough to win that dime of yours, and that's what I'm interested in now."

"I'll bet you another dime that you don't win," said Bob.

"You're getting reckless with your money. I don't want to rob you or I'd take you up."

"Ho! You're afraid to take me up!"

"I never take such a dare, Bob. I haven't got another dime, but I'll put up a quarter flat that I hit that mast fairly once out of three trials."

"A quarter goes," replied Bob, and the money was put up.

Jack squared himself, took aim and let the hatchet go.

"Missed!" shouted Bob, gleefully, as the implement whizzed past the mast and buried itself in the bulkhead.

"That's only one trial, and I came pretty close to it, anyway," said Jack, as he went after the hatchet.

His second attempt was a miss also, and worse by several inches than the first.

"I told you that you couldn't hit it," said Bob. "I could do better than that myself with my eyes shut."

Jack took careful aim on his final trial and flung the hatchet with all his might. This time it went as true as a die. The sharp edge of the implement struck the mast squarely and remained quivering in it.

"How is that?" cried Jack, triumphantly.

"You couldn't do it again," said Bob, disappointedly, as his friend picked up the two quarters and dropped them into his pocket.

"I could do it so often that I'd win all your money without any trouble."

The boys walked over to the mast and Jack loosened the hatchet.

"Hello!" he said. "That mast looks hollow. Never heard of a mast being hollow before."

"Nor me, either. It can't be really hollow. Must be just a hole. Maybe the wood is rotten in that place."

Jack began to dig away and enlarge the split the hatchet had made.

"I guess you're right about it only being a hole, Bob, but it looks as if the hole was made there by some one and then carefully closed up."

"Open it up, then. Perhaps there's something hidden there, and that is what the negro is looking for," said Bob, in some excitement.

"Go and get me the chisel," said Jack.

Bob got it in short order. Jack applied it around the edges of what looked like a plug, and in a few minutes he dislodged the piece of wood and exposed an opening inside the mast. Feeling inside with his fingers, Ashmore drew out a small folded piece of coarse paper, and a piece of round, hard wood, four inches in length, about which was carefully wound a long, thin line, full of knots. There was nothing else in the hole.

"Anything in there?" asked Bob, eagerly.

"This," replied Jack, showing him the two articles he had found.

"Bring them to the light and let's see what they are," said Bob. "I thought probably that it was money or something equally valuable. It doesn't strike me that the negro would be hunting for a piece of paper and what looks like a fishing line."

They sat on the second of the fore-castle steps, and Jack, laying the cord-wrapped wood on his knee, carefully opened the stained piece of paper. Smoothing it out, they both looked at what appeared to be a rude chart of an island, with figures traced at one point, and objects that resembled an amateur's attempt to delineate trees and other landmarks.

"What the dickens does that stand for, anyway?" asked Bob, clearly puzzled by the drawing.

"Looks like a rough chart of an island," answered Jack.

"How do you know it's an island? I don't see anything to indicate water," said Bob.

"This blank space all around it is probably meant to be water."

"Ho! Whoever drew that, if he meant that for an island, ought to have written across it, 'This is an island.'"

"Do you know what I think it is?" said Jack.

"No. What do you think it is?"

"A treasure chart."

"A treasure chart!" echoed Bob, rather mystified.

"Yes. I believe that shows where some pirate's treasure has been buried."

"What!" cried Bob, snatching the paper and regarding it with new interest, while Jack dropped the piece of wood with the line around it into his pocket. "A pirate treasure! There ain't a bit of writing on it. How could any one find a treasure with that?"

"The man who drew it probably could. I'm going to keep it as a curiosity, anyway."

As he took it out of Bob's hand and placed it in his pocket they both heard the sound of footsteps on the deck overhead.

In another moment the opening in the fore-castle was darkened, and looking up the boys beheld the wicked-looking countenance of Quassamodo glaring down at them.

CHAPTER III.—Quassamodo.

"Ha! You two boys, what you do 'board dis brig?" asked Quassamodo, showing two rows of glistening teeth in a way that was decidedly unpleasant.

"What's that to you, Mister Quassamodo, if that's your name?" asked Jack, boldly.

"Yah! Quassamodo my name, all right. Me s'pose you hab name, too, eh?" said the black, with another unpleasant grin.

"That's as much as to say you want to know who we are?" replied Jack.

"If you be so kind me take it as great favor," grinned the West Indian.

"Gee! He's awfully polite, isn't he?" whispered Bob.

"Well, my name is Jack Ashmore, and my friend here is Bob Oakley."

"You lib in Clifton, you two boy, eh?"

"Yes, that's where we live."

"Berry well. S'pose you take um boat 'long-side and go back where um come?"

"We were just going when you turned up."

"Berry good." Me no 'tand in um way. Come up. No 'tand on ceremony with me. Quassamodo berry fine man in um own country, but here me out ob water," and the black grinned wickedly, as if he thought what he said was a fine joke.

"Come along, Bob," said Jack. "Let's get out of here."

Quassamodo stood aside for them to pass.

"S'pose you hab curiosity what Quassamodo do 'board um brig, eh?" grinned the West Indian. "Me lookin' for lillie bit property dat me lose when brig run foul of um rocks. Under-'tand?"

"Looking for something you lost, eh?" said Jack.

"Dat right. No worth anyt'in' to anybody else."

"You chopped all the bunks away down there, then?"

"Me no deny dat. T'ink probably me leave um property in one ob dem, but forgot which, so me chop um in lillie bit to find out."

"What did you chop away the heel of the bowsprit for? Expect to find your property there?" asked Jack, with a chuckle.

The West Indian darted a wicked look at him, then he said:

"No. Me just try hatchet on um to see if um sharp."

"Well, you made chips enough to start a bon-fire."

"S'pose dat you no tell all dat um see in de fo'k'sle, me t'ink you nice gen'leman. In dat case 'fore me lieb country me pay um visit and give lillie present."

"Oh, we won't say anything. Why should we?"

"Dat right. What good you talk 'bout what no 'portance to um? You two boy make berry fine man some day. P'raps um get to be ruler of um country," grinned the West Indian.

"Yes, I expect to be elected grand exalted high muckamuck," laughed Jack.

"Berry good. Quassamodo visit you den and pay um best 'spects."

"That's right. I'll pick out a soft job for you."

They had reached the side of the wreck by this time and so Jack and Bob hastened to get into their catboat.

"Good-by, Mister Quassamodo," sung out Jack, as the boat fell away, "we'll see you later."

"Me wish you berry good mornin', young gen'lemen, and pleasant sail. S'pose you hab anyt'in' to say to me some time me berry glad to see um at Sailors' Rest."

Jack glanced back at the wreck and noticed the West Indian still standing on deck watching them. He headed the Sunbeam to the edge of the shoal and then circled around to the seaward side of it, where he lowered the sail and cast the anchor. The next time he looked at the wreck Quassamodo had disappeared.

"He's gone down into the fo'k'sle to resume his work," thought Jack. "I wonder if it is the treasure chart he is after? If so he'll never find it now. It's too bad that it isn't more definite. Not a word of writing on it to show what the name of the island is, or where it is located. I

don't see what good it is as a guide to any one but the chap who drew it, supposing my guess is correct that it really is a chart referring to some hidden treasure. I'll show it to Mr. Peaseley and see if he can make anything out of it. He's an old sailor, and might be able to discover something in it that I can't. Bob now appeared with the fishing lines and can of bait, and the boys were soon angling for the fishy denisons of the deep. Jack got the first bite, and was pulling in a wriggling mackerel, whose silvery-striped surface shone in the sunshine, when both boys heard a shout behind them. They looked in that direction and saw Quassamodo standing by the bulwark of the wreck, making furious gesticulations at them.

"He wants us to come back," said Bob.

"He'll have to take it out in wanting, then. We're not going to pull up stakes when we've got down to business just to oblige him."

So the boys paid no attention to the West Indian, but went on fishing.

"Hello!" exclaimed Bob, a few moments later. "He's coming over to us in his boat."

"Let him come," said Jack, indifferently.

Bob, however, kept an eye on the black man. Quassamodo sailed his small craft up close to where the Sunbeam was moored.

"Ha! You two boy!" cried the black. "Why you no answer when I 'dress you, eh?"

"We're fishing," replied Jack coolly.

"Me no care what um doin'. Look here, me want to talk to um."

"All right, talk away, but don't come too close, or you'll scare the fish," said Jack.

"You two boy pay 'tention," replied the West Indian, in a savage tone. "Why um take hatchet in fo'k'sle and break um mast open, eh?"

"Just for fun," answered Jack.

"No talk dat way to me. Understand? Me no put up with it," cried the West Indian, looking decidedly ugly. "Me want to know what um find in mast."

"What ought we to find in a mast but wood?" retorted Jack.

"S'pose you t'ink you hab fun with Quassamodo, eh? Me show you diff'rent," cried the black man, hauling his sail so as to bring his boat alongside of the Sunbeam.

"You go to grass," replied Jack, whose spunk was up. "If you meddle with us we'll have you arrested when we get back to the village."

The West Indian showed his teeth ferociously.

"S'pose you no get back to village? What den? You give up what um found 'board brig else me pickle um and toss overboard to um fishes."

The situation began to look decidedly threatening to the boys, and Bob showed symptoms of nervousness.

"Give him the old things, Jack," he said, in a low tone. "They're no good to you."

"Give him nothing," growled Jack. "No rascal of his stripe is going to bulldoze me."

The boy laid his hand on a stout club that he saw under the seat and prepared for action.

"Now, den, me take what you found," said the black, as his boat swept alongside. "S'pose you no give, den me take."

Jack sprang back out of his reach as the West Indian grasped the side of the Sunbeam.

"Me no got time to waste arguin' de matter. Hand over, or you see what um do."

"What will you do?" retorted Jack.

"Ha! You t'ink me no mean business, eh? Me show um!"

The West Indian jumped to his feet, and as he put one leg over into the cockpit of the Sunbeam he drew an ugly-looking knife, about eighteen inches long. That was enough for Jack. He acted so promptly as to astonish Bob, who had sprang toward the cabin in great alarm. He swung his club at the black man's arm, catching him a sharp blow on the wrist. The knife went hurtling through the air for a dozen feet, struck the water with a splash, and sank out of sight. The West Indian uttered a furious cry of baffled rage, darted a venomous look at Jack and sprang into the Sunbeam, intent on vengeance.

CHAPTER IV.—The Secret of the Treasure Chart.

Jack had no intention of permitting him to come into close quarters if he could help it. Accordingly he swung his club again, and the heavy end caught Quassamodo alongside of the ear. Jack meant business when he struck out, and consequently the blow was a heavy one. Quassamodo went down stunned in the boat. Jack then reached out and grabbed the black's boat before it had floated out of reach.

"Now, then, Bob," he said. "Help me toss this rascal aboard his craft."

Quassamodo was tumbled into the other craft.

"What are you going to do now? Cast him adrift?"

"No, that wouldn't do. The tide might change before he'd drifted in far enough to be picked up by one of the smacks. We'll have to pull up anchor and tow him back to the wreck, where we'll tie the boat to one of the ropes."

"When he comes to his senses he might come after us again," said Bob.

"I don't think he'll bother us any more today. If he does we can easily fight him off."

"I'm afraid he'll lay for you on shore and do you an injury. He's a wicked rascal. If you hadn't knocked that knife out of his fist in such a neat manner he might have stuck you."

"Don't you worry about me, Bob. I can look after myself. I'll have one of the constables take him up on the charge of murderous assault when we get back, and you will have to go before the magistrate with me to corroborate my statement. He'll be taken care of for some time at the expense of the State."

"But he'll get out some time, and then look out. Those kind of chaps have a long memory."

"Don't let's bother about the future. The present is what I'm most concerned about. Just lower the sail on his craft, will you? and then we'll lift the anchor."

Bob let the sail down with a run, but did not bother with tying it up. After that they got the anchor aboard and towed the craft alongside the wreck, where they made it fast. This accomplished, they sailed to another part of the shoals and resumed their fishing. About noon they had quite a catch of mackerel and other fish, and

then they stopped for dinner, which they had brought with them. After the meal they found that the fish had ceased to bite. They would have hoisted their sail and made back for the village, but a dead calm had fallen on the face of the water and they were obliged to remain where they were. The boys made a kind of awning of their sail and squatted down underneath it. Jack pulled the supposed treasure chart out of his pocket, and looked it over more carefully than before, but could make little out of it. Within an irregular oblong circle where he seen a cross, a rude tree, five small crosses in a line, and a circle near them. That was all.

"That cross there, between the tree and the shore, is probably where the treasure is buried," he said, "that is, if this chart has reference to a treasure."

"What makes you think it has?" asked Bob.

"It is merely a supposition on my part. I used to hear a whole lot about treasure charts from the sailors around the village. They said there were loads of treasure which had been buried years and years ago, particularly on the small islands or keys of the Caribbean, that had never been recovered by any one, and probably never would be. The fellows who buried the money and other articles of value always made a rough chart of its location so that they could find their way back to it when they wanted to. For various reasons they didn't always get the chance to go back and dig it up, and, consequently, lots of the treasure still remains where it was originally put."

"I've read stories about pirates' treasure," said Bob, "and I always found them very interesting. But of course they were not true."

"I've read true stories about the buccaneers or pirates of the Spanish Main," said Jack, putting the chart down where the hot sun shone full upon it. "They were a blood-thirsty lot in those days. They must have acquired an awful lot of wealth, for they used to rob every silver ship they could overhaul. In those times the South American and Mexican mines were turning out fortunes in pure silver, which was melted into ingots and shipped to Spain in galleons, as they were called."

"Where did you read about them?" asked Bob, much interested. "I'd like to find out more about them."

"In an old book called the 'Buccaneers of the Spanish Main.' An old sailor, who is dead and gone now, loaned it to me before my father died."

"I suppose there's no chance of finding that book now, is there?" asked Bob, eagerly.

"I couldn't tell you who's got it now. You might find a copy, or something similar, in a second-hand book store in Boston."

"I mean to look it up."

"Stick your head up, Bob, and see if there's any sign of a breeze in sight," said Jack, reaching for the treasure chart to put it back in his pocket.

When his eyes rested on it he uttered a gasp of astonishment which attracted his companion's attention.

"What's the matter?" asked Bob.

"Look, Bob, look at that paper!" said Jack, pointing at the chart.

Bob looked and he gave an exclamation of surprise. A wonderful change had come over the rough chart. Where before there had been nothing but blank space there now appeared words and figures, staring them in the face, while the paper itself was slowly curling up under the heat of the sun.

"My gracious!" cried Jack.

"Chuck it overboard," ejaculated Bob; "the durned old thing is bewitched!"

Jack snatched the chart up, but instead of following Bob's suggestion, he smoothed the paper out across his knee and looked at the writing. The document was hot enough to make its handling almost unpleasant, but Jack held on to it and looked intently at the writing which had appeared in such a mysterious way. Across the center of the outlined island was marked, "Little Key, abt. 5 L SW Turks. L. abt 20 d 51 m. L abt 71 d 15 m."

Pointing at the cross on the chart was now seen an arrow, with the words, "Treasure here" above and below it.

Across the top of the paper appeared the following: "6 Fm ESE from H T. 20 Fm W by S to Palmetto. Dig 5 F."

At the bottom in one corner was written: "Drawn by John Gilpin."

At the opposite corner: "Take bearings from N side abt midway shore. Bring 5 palmettos in line grove with coffin bearing SE."

"It's a treasure chart, sure enough!" said Jack, in no little excitement. "See that arrowhead and the words 'Treasure here,' pointing at the cross? There's the name of the island, 'Little Key.' It is situated about four L southwest of Turks."

"What does L and Turks mean?" asked Bob, equally excited.

"L means leagues, and Turks is probably the name of a larger island bearing northeast. Little Key is therefore twelve miles from Turks Island."

"What are those letters and figures along the top?"

"The latitude and longitude of the small key. Why, with this writing it's as easy to find as rolling off a log."

"And do you really believe there's buried treasure on that island?" asked Bob.

"I don't know any more about it than what it says, but that seems to indicate that there is, or at least was, at one time. It may have been recovered long ago."

Even as the boys gazed at the paper the writing gradually became dim as the paper cooled.

"Oh, I say, it's fading out. Make a note of it, quick, or you'll lose it altogether."

Jack laughed.

"Don't worry. I'm onto this thing. That's written in a sort of sympathetic ink, only visible when heated. If I were to lay it in the sun again it would all come out as plain as before."

The boys looked oceanward, but they couldn't see even a cat's-paw of wind.

"Looks hazy along the horizon," said Jack. "We'll probably have a slant after a time."

After a glance at the wreck they crawled under the shelter of the sail again. The warmth of the afternoon soon made them drowsy, and after talking a little while they nodded off to sleep.

And while they slept the distant haze drew

thicker and nearer, and finally resolved itself into a dense fog that crept upon the shoal like a thief in the night. All unconscious of the presence of this insidious enemy the boys slept on till the fog reached the shoal and swallowed up the wreck and the distant lowland neck, whose mammoth head was Clifton village. Finally a big log, which had floated out from Boston harbor, struck the Sunbeam a heavy blow on her bows. The shock not only awoke the boys, but it caused the boat to pull its anchor off bottom, and she drifted out into deep water, carrying it with her.

CHAPTER V.—Lost In the Fog.

"Suffering sixpence! What's this?" cried Bob, as he stuck his head from under the sail. "Where the dickens have we got to?"

Jack stuck his head out the other side and saw that they were surrounded by a thick fog.

"I guess we're in the same place we were when we went to sleep, only a fog has come up and captured us."

"It isn't a nice thing to be caught in a fog on North Shoal," said Bob.

"As long as we're anchored to the shoal we can't lose our way, and we're not in much danger of being run down by a passing vessel."

Unfortunately, the catboat was not anchored to the shoal, but was rapidly drifting out into the trackless Atlantic. The motion, however, was so imperceptible to the boys that they were not aware of their true position.

"What time is it, Bob?" asked Jack, after a short silence.

Bob consulted his silver watch and announced that it was after four o'clock.

"We have three hours of daylight before us," said Jack. "Perhaps the fog will lift before that."

"I hope so," replied Bob. "I don't want to stay here all night."

And so they talked while the fog, instead of lifting, seemed to get more opaque.

"It's five o'clock and the mist is thicker than ever," said Bob, after lighting a match to look at his timepiece. "Let's get in under cover. I've swallowed all the fog I want to. I'd rather swallow something more solid, for I'm getting plaguey hungry."

"Same here," replied Jack. "I think we left a couple of sandwiches when we were eating dinner. They'll taste good now."

So they retired to the cabin, found the sandwiches and ate them with great relish.

"Too bad we didn't fetch a whole pie along, then we'd have a slice apiece left," said Bob, smacking his lips, for he had a weakness for pie at all times.

There were two small lockers in the little cabin, one on either side, and the boys took possession of them and stretched out. The Sunbeam was by this time more than a mile to the eastward of the shoal, though the lads thought she was still at anchor. Another hour wore away and they were still in the grasp of the fog.

"I'm afraid we're stuck for the night," said Bob. "The fog is still as thick as pea soup."

"I'm afraid so, too, for it will be dark in an-

other hour. However, there's no use crying over spilled milk."

It was dark in less than an hour, for the mist added to the general obscurity. Shortly after, the boys grew weary of talking and fell asleep. And while they slept in fancied security an ocean-going steamer that plied between New York City and Portland, Maine, swept by them at half speed, narrowly missing running them down. The swell jerked the little craft violently up and down and awoke them.

"Hello! What's that?" asked Bob. "Must be a sea on, but I don't hear the wind."

They sprang to their feet and rushed out into the cockpit. There was only a light wind blowing that seemed to make little impression on the mist, but the Sunbeam was still rocking unpleasantly. The hoarse whistle of the steamship was to be heard blowing away southward.

"This dern boat feels as if she was afloat," said Bob.

"Can't be. We didn't pull in the anchor," replied Jack.

"I know we didn't, but somehow or another she doesn't feel as if she's tied to anything."

When Jack crawled over the roof of the cabin to the bows of the catboat he found the mooring-line hanging straight downward. It didn't take him more than a minute to discover that the anchor was not holding the boat.

"My gracious! We are adrift for a fact! What is to be done? If we hoist the sail we cannot tell in what direction to steer for the land," said Jack to himself.

Then he called Bob forward and told him of their predicament.

"Help me get the anchor aboard," he concluded.

They soon had the anchor out of the water and secured on the deck.

"I suppose we'll drift about now till the fog lifts," said Bob.

"Your supposition is a correct one," replied his companion.

"Don't you think we'd better hoist the sail," said Bob.

"No, for I've no idea in what direction the shore is."

"We may get run down in this fog."

"We've got to chance it. At any rate we'd better keep out of the cabin until the weather clears."

There was a lantern in the cabin. Jack lit it, climbed to the top of the mast and tied it up there. Its light made but little impression on the fog.

CHAPTER VI.—A Strange Craft.

The hours passed away drearily enough to them, and it seemed as if the night never would end, although the sun was due to rise in about twenty minutes after four.

"This is the worst I've ever been up against," said Bob, as he flapped his arms vigorously about to try and shake off the chill that penetrated to his very bones. "My father and mother will be worried to death about me."

"They'll learn from Mr. Peaseley that you and I went off together yesterday morning in his catboat to visit North Shoal, and they'll no doubt understand that we were caught by the fog."

"Suppose when morning comes and we get out of the fog we find ourselves at sea, what are we going to do?"

"Don't look on the worst side, Bob."

"I can't help it. We haven't a thing aboard to eat, and I'm almost starved."

"We've got the fish."

"Excuse me, I don't fancy raw fish as an article of diet."

"We can cook them."

"How?"

"There's a coal-oil stove in the cabin, and there's pans, dishes and other fixings in one of the lockers. As long as the weather remains as calm as it is we can use the stove on top of the cabin. Mr. Peaseley has often used it that way, he told me when he went on a short cruise up or down the coast."

At that moment the Sunbeam floated right out of the mist bank and they beheld the sky above and down to the very horizon, ahead and on either side, bright with stars. Behind them they could see nothing but obscurity.

"Hurrah!" shouted Bob. "We're out of it at last."

That fact afforded the boys great satisfaction. Bob struck a match and consulted his watch.

"Four o'clock," he said. "It will soon be daylight, and we'll be able to tell where we are."

"It looks to me as if we're drifting away from the shore," said Jack. "As far as I can see there isn't a sign of land."

"Well, it won't take us long to sail back. I'll bet we aren't such a great way from the shoal."

"I wonder what that is yonder?" said Jack, pointing out a dark smudge on the water. "Must be a vessel."

"Let's hoist our sail and run down to her," suggested Bob. "She's probably bound in for Boston."

"It's a wonder she hasn't a light somewhere about her," said Jack. "Vessels, as a rule, carry lights at night to prevent a collision at sea."

They hoisted the sail and bore down toward her. The wind being very light, they did not make very rapid progress. Soon the eastern sky began to show signs of coming day. With the rising of the sun the breeze freshened and the whole surface of the ocean, now spread out before the boys, was ruffled with small whitecaps. Although they had no compass aboard the sun gave them a general idea of their bearings. They knew the coast lay to the west, though they couldn't see it. The mist still clung close to the water in that direction, and they believed when it lifted the shores of Massachusetts would be seen not such a great way off. Their attention now was almost wholly occupied with the vessel in the near distance. She was about a mile distant and Jack made her out to be a brigantine.

She was slowly sailing westward with yards squared, under her upper and lower topsails, foresail, jib and foretopmast staysail. There was one thing about her that greatly puzzled Jack, who had a nautical eye. The vessel did not seem to be under any control. She would come up into the wind one moment and fall off again the next, just as if the helmsman was asleep at his post and the craft was sailing herself.

"I never saw a vessel act that way before," said Jack, after calling his companion's attention

to the erratic movements of the brigantine. "Looks to me as if there was no one at the wheel."

Although Bob was no sailor, he could not but see that the vessel was acting in a very queer way.

"Maybe the steersman is asleep," he said.

"That isn't likely, for the officer of the watch would soon bring him to his senses. That craft has been sailing in that fashion ever since we got a clear view of her."

"She's a dirty looking vessel. I don't see any flag that would show her nationality," said Bob.

"She's a foreigner, all right."

"How can you tell?"

"By her general appearance. Might be a Portuguese from Lisbon, or an Italian from Genoa, Leghorn or Naples. It is evident she's making for Boston."

"We'll follow her in and then we can't go astray."

The closer they drew to the brigantine the more singular her actions appeared to them. Not a sign of a human being appeared on the poop deck nor forecastle. Suddenly Jack noticed that the vessel's boats on the side they were approaching were not only not suspended high up on the davits inboard, but that the davits were swung outward, and the lowering tackle was swinging about close to the water.

"By George!" he cried. "I believe she has been abandoned."

"Maybe there's been a mutiny on board, and the crew took to the boats?" suggested Bob.

"What about the officers?"

"The sailors might have killed them. I've read about such things in books."

"Whatever the reason for leaving her they got away in such a hurry that they didn't take the trouble to lash the wheel in order to keep the craft before the wind."

They were now within a few hundred yards of the brigantine. There wasn't the slightest evidence that any one was aboard of her. The boys could see the wheel turn this way and that as the rudder swung aimlessly from side to side when the vessel came up in the wind or fell off. Jack steered straight for the tackle hanging from the after davit.

"Go forward, Bob, and catch onto that tackle. Make it fast to our painter. Then I'll shin up and see what I can see aboard."

Bob obeyed, and in a few minutes they were fast alongside the brigantine.

CHAPTER VII.—The Mystery and Its Explanation.

Jack pulled himself up the tackle, reached the davit and straddling it, slid down to the bulwark, where he stood looking around the deck.

"What do you see!" asked Bob, from the top of the catboat's cabin.

"The main hatch is open," replied Jack, "but nothing else out of the common. Come up the way I did."

Bob did so and joined his companion on deck.

"We'll take a look in the cabin," said Jack. "Come on."

The door of the passage connecting with the cabin stood wide open and the boys entered, Bob rather fearsomely, as if he half expected to see some terrible sight. The pantry door, opening off the passage, also stood open, and looking in they saw a scene of wild disorder. Stores of various kinds were scattered about the floor and upset on the shelves. A case of cognac was literally torn to pieces, half a dozen of the bottles lying about at haphazard and one of them broken.

"Looks as if there had been a free fight in this place," said Bob. "I'll bet there has been a mutiny on board this vessel."

Jack said nothing, but was willing to admit that the appearance of things was not reassuring. After they had satisfied their curiosity with the pantry they went on to the cabin. Here the boys were fairly paralyzed by the look of things. The chairs had been torn from their fastenings and lay all about in twisted and broken wrecks of their former shape. The table was littered with splintered glass fragments of the decanter and glasses which had once swung in a tray beneath the skylight. The floor was covered with bedding, wearing apparel, and a hundred odds and ends that had evidently come from the state-rooms on either side. The captain's room abaft was a total wreck.

"My gracious!" ejaculated Bob. "A crazy man at his worst could hardly do so much damage. What the dickens does it all mean?"

"I give it up," replied Jack, scratching his head. "One would think some wild animal had been tearing around in here."

"That's right. The damage done beats all creation."

They looked carefully about for some solution of the mystery, but could find nothing that would let in any light on it.

"Maybe the officers and crew got blind drunk and pulled things about," hazarded Bob. "There are four empty brandy bottles on the floor which, taken in connection with the smashed case of spirits in the pantry, might explain matters."

"It is possible, but hardly reasonable," replied Jack. "Let's go forward and see how things look in the fo'k'sle."

The boys left the cabin and proceeded toward the bows. They mounted the four steps to the fore-castle deck and approached the opening leading down into the sailors' quarters. They were within a yard of it when out of the hole slowly rose the head of an enormous ape. Bob uttered a yell of terror when he caught sight of the hideous object, started back, tripped himself up and rolled off the fore-castle out onto the main deck, where he lay stunned from the shock. Jack stood glued to the spot and stared in amazement at the terrible apparition.

"My gracious!" he breathed. "What kind of monkey is this? He looks like the grandfather of the whole race. He's a holy terror. Where has Bob got to?"

Bob wasn't to be seen, so Jack backed away to the edge of the fore-castle, intending to jump down on the main deck. Then it was that he saw his companion lying in a heap quite still below him. He sprang down seized Bob in his arms and dragged him over to the cabin. Going

into the pantry he picked up the broken brandy bottle, which still held about a third of its contents, poured some of the liquor into a cup, and returning to his friend, opened his mouth and let some of the spirits trickle down his throat. Bob was coming to, anyway, but the brandy hastened his revival. He opened his eyes, sat up and looked around.

"What happened to me?" he asked.

"The monkey you saw at the fo'k'sle scuttle scared you so much that you took a tumble."

"Where did I tumble to?"

"Onto the deck, and the shock knocked you out."

"Oh, lor', do you call that thing a monkey? Why it was as big as a giant. It must be a gorilla. Where is it now? And what is it doing aboard this vessel?"

"It's over there with its head out of the scuttle opening. I couldn't tell you how it got aboard this brigantine. Probably it escaped from its cage after the vessel was abandoned."

"Then let us make a sneak for our boat before he takes a notion in his head to get better acquainted with us."

"And give up the salvage we will be entitled to for bringing this brigantine into Boston?"

"We would never be able to sail the vessel in with that beast at liberty on board. He'd make mincemeat of us in no time."

At that moment the huge ape slowly and with great difficulty worked its way out of the fore-castle. Then it began to stagger around the roof of the fore-castle in a drunken way. Finally it rolled off onto the deck something like Bob did. Picking itself up it came toward the cabin, rolling from side to side, its great legs almost giving way under it. Bob made a dash for the davit by which they had gained the deck of the vessel. His intention was to regain the catboat in the shortest possible space of time. Climbing the bulwark he was about to pull himself out to the tackle when he made a terrible discovery. The Sunbeam was gone. With a gasp of dismay he looked out on the water and saw it sailing away by itself a quarter of a mile off.

"The boat is gone," he screamed back at Jack, who had followed him with the intention of trying to persuade him to remain on board, for to his eyes the huge monkey seemed to be in a condition incapable of doing much more mischief.

"Gone!" yelled Jack. "What do you mean?"

"She's broken loose and is sailing away yonder."

"That'll be the end of her, then. Why didn't you tie her securely?"

"I thought I did. Oh, lor', that gorilla will do us up now!"

By this time the ape had reached the main hatch. Bob was regarding its approach with the greatest alarm, while Jack was figuring on getting out of its way. At that moment a change came in the wind. A strong flaw struck the brigantine's sails, which, being braced in the wrong direction to meet it, caused the craft to lurch to port. The ape lost what little balance it had and pitched head first down the open hatchway. Jack rushed over to the hatch and looked down. The animal lay stretched out at

full length, feebly working its arms and legs, and rolling its head. Now was the chance to secure it below, and Jack shouted to Bob to come over. He seemed loath to venture.

"Come here, will you, and help me put the hatch on. Then he won't be able to bother us."

Bob now understood the situation and he lost no time in helping Jack make a prisoner of the dangerous animal.

"What a blessing the beast tumbled in there," said Bob, as soon as the cover was on the hatch. "Only for that he wouldn't have done a thing to us. You acted as if you don't understand what fierce rascals those gorillas are."

"That isn't a gorilla."

"It isn't?"

"No."

"What is it, then?" asked Bob, scornfully. "Don't you suppose I know what a gorilla is?"

"I admit it is next door to one. That is a huge ape, and they're ugly things to tackle when they're mad. This one, however, is almost harmless now."

"How do you make that out?"

"Because any fool could see with half an eye that he is stupidly drunk. He's been filling himself up with brandy. He probably drank the contents of those four cognac bottles we saw in the cabin, and the first effect of it was to send him on a rampage about the place. I'll bet the secret of all this mystery is that he was being brought to America in a cage in the 'tween decks of this vessel. He broke out of the cage and came on deck through the hatch which was no doubt left open in fair weather to give him plenty of air. I can imagine that he was in a bad humor over his confinement below, and that he raised Cain fore and aft. The sailors were frightened into taking to the boats, and the officers joined them when they saw that it was impossible to kill him except at a tremendous risk. The brute, finding himself alone, rummaged about for something to eat, and in the course of his foraging smashed open that case of French brandy, breaking one of the bottles. Getting a taste of the stuff, he wanted more, and carried the four bottles into the cabin, where he knocked their necks off and drank the liquor. As soon as it got into his head he wrecked the cabin and staterooms and then betook himself to the fo'k'sle. That's my idea how the brigantine came to be abandoned, for I don't see any other way to account for it."

As a matter of fact, as the story afterward came out in the papers, Jack hit the exact solution, only it had a tragic side he did not dream of. The captain of the vessel had tried to kill the ape with his revolver. After putting two balls into the beast's body the ape caught him, broke his neck, twisted his body like a corkscrew and threw it overboard. The ease with which the brute disposed of the skipper caused a panic among the other officers and crew and they hastily lowered the boats and left the vessel.

They intended to return after a time, when they thought the animal might be asleep, but lost the brigantine in the fog. They were picked up next day and carried in to Boston, but by that time their vessel, with Jack and Bob aboard, was a considerable distance south of Cape Cod.

CHAPTER VIII.—The Gale.

Jack and Bob soon found that they had something else to think about than the ape under the hatches. A sudden change had come over the weather while they were aboard the brigantine. A heavy bank of clouds had mounted the sky, a thick haze was now creeping over the surface of the ocean, and there were other indications of a coming gale.

"We'll have more than rain before long," said Jack, nodding his head confidently.

"You mean we'll have more wind, I suppose."

"You can bet we will, and lots of it. We'll have to reduce the canvas or we may go to the bottom with our prize."

"You don't mean that, do you?" asked Bob, nervously.

"I do mean it, most emphatically. We must turn to at once and strip her."

"Get all those sails in?" said Bob, casting his eyes aloft.

"Exactly. Except the foretopmast stays'l. We'll leave that."

"How are we going to furl them? We aren't sailors, and there's only two of us at that."

"We can't furl them in ship-shape style, but if the weather holds as it is now I guess I can manage to clew them up after a fashion. I'm going to bring the old hooker up into the wind now and lash the wheel, so she'll hold steady."

Jack cut enough line from a coil hanging from a belaying pin at one of the masts to answer his purpose, and he soon had the brigantine under control. The two boys set about the task which at first sight appeared to be impossible for them to accomplish, considering their inexperience. Jack's slight knowledge of seamanship was sufficient to show him how the work should be performed, and with the winch as a very material aid, the huge squares of canvas were clewed up after rather a clumsy fashion. The wind came on in intermittent puffs while they were thus employed, and then died away to a dead calm. The boys took advantage of the respite to make a second breakfast in the pantry. While they were at it the gale swooped down on them all of a sudden. The brigantine went over on her heams' ends and Jack and Bob landed on top of each other in a corner. The vessel partly recovered from the shock and then dashed through the smother like a frightened bird skimming the waves. Jack hastened to the wheel, unlashed it and kept the brigantine before the wind. She was not pointing a course to reach Boston harbor now, for it was impossible for the boy to do other than let the craft have her own way, which was carrying her due south at race-horse speed. As Bob was of no use he kept under cover in the cabin. He did Jack one good turn, however—he found the chief mate's sou'wester, and waterproof coat among the debris in the cabin, and brought it up to him, holding the wheel pretty steady while Jack donned them. This was a fortunate discovery, for the rain soon came pouring down in sheets. As the moments flew by the gale increased, until it seemed to the boys as if it could not possibly blow harder, and yet it was far from approaching the intensity of

a hurricane. The brigantine ploughed through the waves at a furious rate, careening well to the leeward. Her foretopmast staysail had long since been blown clean out of the bolt ropes, and vanished like a puff of white smoke into the gale. The only canvas she now had spread was her closely-reefed jib. Morning passed away and merged into afternoon, and still the gale reigned supreme over the face of the sea. The waves that followed and surrounded the brigantine seemed tall enough to engulf her, but she rose like a cork to them and flew onward like a thing of life. Jack grew weary of his prolonged spell at the wheel as the hours went by, but he could not leave his post even for a few moments, for the vessel in that case would have broached to and in all likelihood have foundered. Finally he had to call on Bob to help him hold the wheel steady. His companion brought him up a good swig of brandy to warm his blood and put new life into him. They both stuck to the wheel until night fell, dark and stormy, over the face of the broad Atlantic. They exchanged but few words, as talking could only be carried on under great difficulty.

"Do you think you can hold her steady while I go into the pantry and get a bite to eat?" asked the exhausted Jack, bellowing out the words in Bob's ear.

Bob nodded and Ashmore relinquished the wheel. He was away fifteen minutes and then returned, feeling little better. Oakley then went below and had something to eat himself, after which he returned to Jack's side. At midnight the gale broke, though it was an hour before Jack noticed any decided change for the better. By this time the brigantine presented the appearance of a vessel that had gone through a strenuous experience. Her top hamper was reduced to a shapeless wreck, all her upper spars having been carried away, and her topmast gone by the board. Had she had her crew and officers aboard none of these things would have happened, but the half-furled sails had been torn loose in sections, and the strain of the wind upon them had several times threatened the loss of the vessel herself. Only the fact that the upper masts had given way under the weight of the gale saved her. Jack sent Bob below to take a rest, and it was long after daybreak before he reappeared, rubbing his eyes. About half a gale was now blowing, and that was sufficient to compel the boys to keep their wits about them. Jack felt about half dead, but he did not feel that he could afford to take a rest until the weather became more favorable, for he dared not rely on Bob's inexperience under the present condition of things. The most he would do was to go below long enough to eat something and brace upon a little more brandy. His arms were numb and sore from holding on to the jerking wheel, and he rubbed them down with brandy before he returned to the poop. Finding that Bob was doing pretty well, he sat down at the top of the companion steps leading to the cabin, within a yard of his friend, and watched him. Here fatigue overcame him and he dropped off asleep. Bob stuck to his job like a little hero and let Jack sleep until a heavy wave, striking the brigantine under her counter, and almost jerking the spokes out of Bob's hands, awoke him. The sun was now

making valiant efforts to pierce the heavy clouds that obscured the heavens.

"The waves seem worse than ever," said Bob, in rather a dejected tone, as Jack relieved him at the wheel.

"That's because the wind, being no longer so heavy, does not flatten them out," replied his companion.

"When do you think the storm will be over?"

"The gale has practically blown itself out now," replied Jack. "We're getting the tail-end at present. By noon it ought to be down to a fair wind."

"I wish the sun would come out. It would make things look more cheerful."

"It may be out by twelve o'clock, or even before."

"It can't make its appearance any too soon to suit me. I guess I'll go down and get something to eat. I wonder how that ape is getting on. He must be getting over his jag by this time. We ought to put a weight on the hatch to prevent him from pushing it up and getting out."

"Don't worry about the ape. It will take him some time to get over his drunk. Your idea of putting something heavy on the hatch, however, is a good one. When the rascal comes to he'll be hungry, and then we'll hear him making Rome howl in the 'tween decks. He'll have to starve as far as we're concerned, for we couldn't take the chances of trying to feed him with canned stuff, even if we could find enough of it."

Bob stayed below half an hour and then rejoined Jack.

"I wonder how I ever pulled through last night," said Bob. "I've never been out on the ocean before in any kind of a blow. And I don't know anything more about steering a vessel than a donkey. Why, it almost gives me the cold shivers to look out over the water now and to feel the plunging of the brigantine. It's a wonder I don't feel seasick. The storm must have scared it all out of me."

"You're liable to be sick when it gets calmer."

"How so?" asked Bob, in surprise.

"I don't say you will, but I've known people whose stomachs would stand a good tossing about under certain circumstances, and the next time they went on the water in a light blow they got as sick as a dog."

"I hope that won't happen to me. I should think I could stand most anything after this experience."

"If the wind veers around and kicks up a cross-sea the brigantine will roll your stomach out of you."

"Oh, lor'! I don't want that to happen," grimaced Bob.

"I have an idea that the wind will hold steady as it is. It is gradually losing its weight, and may drop to just a smacking breeze."

"Where do you imagine we are now?"

"Ask me something easy, Bob. I guess we're far out from the American coast, and well to the south of Boston."

"We'll never get back there with this craft. Look at the condition of her. I don't believe we could sail her back if she was in as good condition as we found her."

"I'm afraid you're right, Bob. We'll have to hoist a distress signal when the weather gets

better, and ask to be taken off. That gale put us out of a good thing, but it can't be helped now."

Two hours later things were so much improved that Jack left Bob in charge of the wheel and went below to take a sleep.

CHAPTER IX.—After the Gale.

Jack enjoyed a four-hour spell of rest, and then came on deck much refreshed. It was well along toward noon, the blue sky appeared here and there in spots, and the sun frequently showed his jovial face, as if anxious to make amends for the wild pranks lately indulged in by that hoary-headed sinner, Old Boreas. The wind was blowing a fresh breeze, which was like a mild rephyr as compared with the late gale. Jack felt he could relieve Bob and lash the wheel with perfect safety. He immediately did so.

"It's a relief to get away from that darned old wheel," said Bob. "When I get back to school I'll have a whole lot to tell the boys about how I sailed a half-wrecked brigantine through a spanking gale, expecting that every moment would be my last," he said, with a smile. "If we aren't rescued pretty soon I'll become a full-fledged sailor, bet your boots! A regular Ben Bolt or Tom Bowling."

"I see you're feeling pretty good, Bob, now that we're comparatively out of danger for the present," chuckled Jack.

"Yes, a fellow feels a whole lot different when the sun is shining and the sea is not trying to come aboard every minute to swamp the vessel. I shouldn't care to be a sailor as a regular business. It's too strenuous at times, like last night and yesterday afternoon, for instance. It is much better to be on shore when the wind gets a jag on. And that reminds me that we haven't taken measures yet to make sure that ape doesn't get out of the hold. We'd better get busy and clap some weights on the hatch."

"Want to take a look at him first?" asked Jack.

"No, sir! I've had all the look I want. I believe he's already scared seven months' growth out of me."

The boys lost no time in weighting the hatch with a small water barrel, which had been lashed against the galley forward.

"I guess that'll keep him down," said Jack. "I've no doubt but we'll hear from him before long. That ape has proved an expensive investment for somebody. If this brigantine is lost I'll consider him responsible for it."

"That won't worry the beast much. I move we light the galley fire and make some coffee. I saw a package of it on the pantry floor."

"All right, old chap. I'll look after the galley while you go and tidy up the pantry. That will give you a chance to find out what kind of supplies we have on hand."

"That job will suit me. I'll bring you the coffee first."

Bob found that there was plenty of supplies in the pantry—enough to last him and Jack for a considerable time if fate compelled them to remain for any lengthy period in the vessel. Jack

lighted the pantry fire, put water on to boil and in due time turned out a pot of very appetizing coffee. Their dinner consisted chiefly of a jar apiece of boned chicken, all the crackers they could eat, and a can of preserved peaches.

"That meal was fit for a king," said Bob, after swallowing his second cup of coffee.

"I have no fault to find with it. It's the first decent meal we've had since Saturday."

"There's plenty more of the same stuff in the pantry, so we won't starve, that's one blessing. Jack, think if we'd been blown out to sea in the catboat, with nothing aboard but those fish we caught, what a fix we'd have been in."

"The chances are if that gale caught us in the Sunbeam we'd have been food ourselves for the fishes long before this," replied Jack.

"Then it was lucky, after all, that we came aboard this vessel."

"Probably so. It depends a good deal on how far we were from the shore yesterday morning when the fog left us."

"We must have been out of sight of it, for I looked for the coast after we got aboard here and I couldn't see a sign of it."

"Now, Bob, we must search for the flag-locker. Almost any old piece of bunting will do for a signal of distress."

"Where are you going to hang it out? Both the upper masts are gone and are towing alongside attached to the wreck of the rigging."

"I suppose we'll have to nail it to the broken piece of the foretopmast that is standing. We'll also have to find an axe and chop away the rigging holding the wreck alongside. It's mighty fortunate that we pulled through with that stuff hanging to us. I don't see how we ever did it. There must be a special Providence looking out for us two."

"Maybe it's the little cherub that I've heard sits up aloft to keep watch over the life of the sailorman," grinned Bob.

"If that cherub was sitting up aloft last night he got a cold bath when the topmasts went over into the sea," replied Jack. "Come, now, we'll go into the cabin and hunt for the bunting."

While they were searching for the flag-locker Bob wanted to know how soon Jack thought some vessel or steamer would come in sight and take them off.

"At any moment," replied Ashmore. "Maybe by the time we get on deck again there'll be something in sight. Even without a signal this craft looks so dismantled that she's bound to attract attention on any passing vessel within telescope range. The captain of any vessel, unless he's a hog, would come close enough to send a boat to inquire if we wanted assistance."

But, even as he spoke so encouragingly, Jack knew it would not be strange if a week, or even more, elapsed before anything larger than a seabird's wing came within their range of vision. The flag-locker was finally found and a good-sized English ensign was selected as the most available piece of bunting to answer their purpose. Jack found the carpenter's chest in a small room fitted with a bunk off the passage opposite the pantry. He got out an axe and a hammer and some nails.

"While I'm up aloft, Bob," he said, "you take the axe and cut away the rigging that is holding

the wreckage alongside. Then the old hooker will ride more buoyantly, and on a tolerably even keel."

Bob took the axe and proceeded to carry out his instructions, while Jack started up the ratlines to the foretop, which he reached by way of the futtock shrouds. To the splintered wreck of the foretopmast he nailed the British ensign, Union Jack down, thus converting the flag into a signal of distress. Then he returned to the deck and helped Bob finish his work of relieving the brig of her impediments. As soon as the last piece of rigging was severed, and the wreckage floated off astern, the vessel righted herself a good bit.

"That makes a whole lot of difference, doesn't it?" said Bob.

"Sure, it does. Makes the deck easier to walk on. I'm going below to see if I can find the captain's glass. Better come with me."

The boys partially cleared up the cabin, throwing the broken glass and demoralized chairs overboard. The captain's telescope was found suspended by a couple of straps in his room. Jack carried it on deck and swept the ocean as far as he could see with it, but there was not a sail in sight.

"Nothing doing," he said, handing the glass to Bob. "I'm going to leave you in charge of the deck, while I take another snooze. If the wind changes, call me at once."

Bob soon found his lonesome watch very irksome. There was nothing to look at but the deck, the stunted masts, and the heaving, dark blue sea on every side. The clouds had almost dispersed by this time, and the sun was shining down with warmth enough to make a shady spot desirable. There wasn't any shady spot on deck, however, so Bob had to seek the cabin passage when he wanted to cool off.

Jack slept until the sun was dipping below the horizon.

"As I didn't hear from you I suppose nothing has turned up," he said to Bob when he came on deck.

"Not a thing. The afternoon passed dead slow with nobody to talk to," replied Bob, glad to see his partner in misfortune again.

"I suppose you're feeling hungry once more. I'll get a fire started and we'll have supper. You can lay out some canned stuff on the cabin table, and I'll bring the coffee pot in when it's ready."

Before going to supper Jack climbed up to the maintop and swept the rapidly-darkening sea with the telescope. There was nothing like a vessel in sight in any quarter of the compass. Bob had found a kerosene lamp in the pantry, and he lighted it and carried it into the cabin, where it gave out a cheerful glow as soon as twilight faded into the darkness of night.

With the setting of the sun the wind had gradually died down into a gentle breeze and as there wasn't any canvas at all spread on the brigantine, she was now making scarcely any headway, simply drifting along with the ocean current.

"I noticed the brig's lanterns, all filled and ready for lighting, in the galley," said Jack, as he commenced to eat some potted tongue and crackers. "After supper I'll lash a couple to the stump of the foretopmast and a couple to the

stump of the maintopmast. That will give a warning of our presence to any vessel approaching us during the night, and saving us from being run down."

"That's first-class," said Bob. "It's going to be a fine night, with little wind. We don't need to stand any watch, do we? We can bring some bedding out on deck and go to sleep there. The cabin is kind of stuffy, anyway."

"I was going to suggest that myself," said Jack. "We'll do it. It won't be necessary for either of us to stand watch on such a night as this promises to be. If the wind should spring up from a fresh quarter the rolling of the brigantine will awaken me and all I'll have to do will be to put her head up to it, lash the wheel again and turn in, leaving the craft to look after herself."

"There's some advantage, after all, in having no sails to attend to," said Bob.

"But it doesn't offset the disadvantage of being helpless and at the mercy of the wind and sea. Tomorrow morning we'll spread the big mainsail and foresail, the only cloths we have left, and head the brig due west. Maybe we'll be able to make some port along the American coast north of Florida."

As soon as the meal was finished Jack went to the galley, lighted the four lanterns and suspended them in the fore and maintops. Then he helped Bob get a couple of mattresses on deck. The night was brilliant with stars, and so warm that they did not need any covering over them, so they turned in just as they were, and ere long both were sound asleep. Jack dreaming that he was at work in Mr. Peaseley's boatbuilding shop, and Bob that he was in his home at Clifton, talking to his father and mother.

CHAPTER X.—Sprung a Leak.

Nothing happened during the night to disturb the boys. They slept like tops and were awakened by the sun shining in their faces. Bob found by his watch that it was nearly seven o'clock. The first thing Jack and Bob did was to look for a sail. They looked in vain—nothing met their eyes but the vast expanse of sparkling water, heaving in long, low, undulating swells. Then Jack seized the telescope and proceeded to the maintop, from which point of vantage he took in the entire horizon. Nothing but sky and water filled the focus wherever he looked, so he descended and proceeded to the galley to cook a pot of coffee for breakfast. After breakfast the mainsail and foresail were set and then Jack unlashed the tiller and stood an hour's trick at the wheel, after which he put Bob on the job and mounted once more to the maintop with the telescope. This time he described a sail a long way off. She seemed to be heading toward them. In half an hour he found she was heading across the brigantine's course, and was likely to pass near them. He ran down and told the news to Bob. Oakley was overjoyed to learn that a sail was approaching them, for he was anxious to leave the half-wrecked vessel and reach land as soon as possible.

He had no interest whatever in trying to save

the brigantine and her cargo under such adverse circumstances. That idea had taken his fancy when they first came aboard with Boston Harbor within easy reaching distance, but things were quite different now. Even Jack himself had given up hope of being able to make anything out of the vessel now. When Bob's hour was up Jack relieved him and he spent his time looking for the distant sail, which was not yet visible from the deck. Half an hour passed before Bob caught sight of her, and then he watched her grow larger and larger in the field of the glass until Jack called him to take his next spell at the wheel. The vessel could be seen like a distant white speck by the naked eye. In the glass she loomed up quite plain. She was heading almost direct for the brigantine. There was little doubt but she would come close enough to see the condition of the vessel and her flag of distress.

"I suppose you have no objection to being taken off, have you?" said Jack.

"Me? I should say not! I'm ready to leave this minute if a boat was alongside waiting for us to jump in."

"I fancy a boat will be coming to us before twelve o'clock, or soon after. We've probably eaten our last meal aboard this craft."

The wind was now a bit heavier than when they first shook their two sails to the breeze, and the vessel was making some headway through the water. It struck Jack that she wasn't moving as fast as she ought to, and that she rolled to the swell with a sluggish motion, like a tired cart-horse.

"She must be a slow sailer under the best of circumstances," he thought, though it was true that she had appeared to fly like a racehorse before the late gale.

Looking over the bulwark into the water he noticed that the tackle attached to the davits, which had swung some two feet above the water when they boarded the craft, now barely cleared the surface when she rolled in the opposite direction, and were submerged by more than a yard when she rolled back. While he was wondering at this and thinking how much nearer the bulwark seemed to the water than formerly a horrible suspicion suddenly took form in his mind. Had the brigantine sprung a leak during the gale? Maybe the thumping of the top-hammer alongside for so many hours before they cut it loose had brought about a leak. The presence of a good bit of water in the hold would account for the sluggish motion of the vessel. The thought that she might be taking water in rapidly, with the possibility of her sinking before help could reach them, greatly alarmed him.

"I won't say a word about it to Bob, for it would scare him out of his seven senses. I'll see if I can find the apparatus for sounding the well. That will tell me how much water there is in the hold."

He found it in its proper place, and soon ascertained that there was nearly five feet of water below.

"I'll test it again in fifteen minutes and see how fast the leak is gaining," he said to himself, rather nervously.

He took the glass and ran up to the maintop to see how far off the oncoming vessel was, and

whether she still held to the same course. He now made her out to be a large-sized schooner, with every stitch of canvas set to the breeze. She carried a bone in her teeth, as the nautical expression is, which means that her sharp cut-water was making the spray fly at a rate that showed she was coming down hand over hand. There was little doubt but that she would pass quite close to the brigantine, and that her people couldn't fail to make out their distress signal.

"She can't come on any too quick now for the safety of Bob and myself. I don't believe this craft will float many hours more. If it wasn't for the appearance of this schooner we'd have to start right in and build a raft to go off on. I never once thought about the possibility of this old hooker springing a leak. I recollect now that it is the custom aboard ship to try the well after a heavy gale to ascertain whether the vessel is tight as usual or has sprung a plank somewhere in her bottom."

Jack was now all nervous excitement, and he watched the approaching schooner continually, fearful that she might alter her course to their disadvantage. But she didn't, and Jack returned to the deck to test the well again. This time there was five feet three inches of water in the hold.

"She's making water fast. Thank goodness, that schooner is coming down on us pretty fast. We haven't too much time in which to get away as matters look. He returned to the poop deck and relieved Bob. In half an hour the schooner was close aboard.

"Take the wheel, Bob. I'm going to get another flag and signal her from the foretop to make sure that she learns of our desperate predicament," said Jack.

He rushed into the cabin, pulled out an American flag this time from the flag-locker, scurried up to the foretop and flaunted the ensign to the breeze, stars downward.

"She's still coming straight for us, and they can see our signals with the naked eye by this time," he said to himself. "There oughtn't to be much doubt about our rescue."

And there wasn't, for inside of twenty minutes the schooner was hove to less than a quarter of a mile away, and a boat was rowing over the waves toward the sinking brigantine.

"It's lucky for us, Bob, that this vessel came up as soon as she did," said Jack, as they both stood at the bulwarks waiting for the boat, "for we're in a worse pickle than you suppose."

"How are we?" asked Bob, looking at him in surprise.

"Why, there's six feet of water in the hold by this time. The brig sprang a leak during the gale and she is sinking fast."

"No," cried Bob, aghast, "you don't mean it!"

"I do, for I've sounded the well twice, and I found that she is making water at the rate of over a foot an hour. It won't be many hours before she goes down."

"Oh, lor'! And I never dreamed of such a thing. How long have you known that?"

"Only within the hour. I noticed the lazy way the brig was rolling, and the lack of buoyancy she showed. It didn't look natural to me, especially as she ought to sit lighter on the water after the loss of so much top-hammer. So

I investigated the well with the result I have just mentioned."

"Well, here comes the boat alongside. We'll be off without loss of time."

The boat came up, one of the two seamen in her caught hold of the tackle hanging from one of the davits, and a red-faced Irishman in the sternsheets shouted to the boys:

"Where's your skipper? Is your brig sinkin', and do yez want to be taken off?"

"There's no one aboard but us two," replied Jack. "The vessel is sinking fast, and we want to get away."

"What's that? No wan aboard but yez two!" returned the Irishman, in a tone of surprise. "Where's the officers and crew?"

"They left the vessel two days or more ago. We——"

He was interrupted by a noise behind. The boys turned around and looked in the direction of the sound. The main hatch had been lifted enough from underneath to upset the water barrel on it, and now it was being hoisted up still further by a pair of long, hairy arms.

"The ape!" cried Bob, suddenly stricken with terror. "He's getting out of the hold. Oh, lor'! Let me get away."

Bob sprang onto the bulwark, scrambled out on the davit and slid down the tackle, landing in a heap in the bottom of the boat. As Jack was following the hatch was thrown over, landing bottom-upward on the deck, and the ape, in a ferocious humor, sprang up the last few steps of the ladder and jumped out of the hatch. His roving eyes soon spied the boy clambering out on the davit, and with a hoarse scream of rage he sprang for the side of the vessel. Jack saw him coming and he made a dive at the tackle, sliding down like a flash.

"Shove off, for your lives!" he cried, with frantic earnestness.

"What do yez mane?" demanded the mate, in astonishment, as the sailor let go the tackle and the other pushed the boat away from the side of the brigantine with his oar.

"Mean! Look there! Pull, for heaven's sake. He'll swamp us if he leaps."

Jack pointed at the gigantic form of the ape, which had jumped, chattering with fury, upon the davit, and remained there, fortunately, looking down with blood-red eyes at the receding boat.

"Howly St. Patrick! Give way, ye spalpeens!" cried the mate, asking for no further explanation just then, for the sight of the ferocious animal gave him a cold shiver, and he as well as the two sailors were as eager as the boys to put as great a space between themselves and the ape as possible in the shortest space of time.

CHAPTER XI.—Rescued.

"Howld on, me bullies!" cried the mate of the schooner, when the boat had placed a safe distance between itself and the brigantine. "Let's take a look at that apparishun. 'May me sowl rist in glory, if I ever saw the like of that baste before! Where did it come from, me laddy-bucks?' turning to the two boys. "Faith, it's an orang outang, or me eyes desave me."

"It's an immense ape," replied Jack.

"Sure, it's all the same. How came the baste aboard the brig?"

While they were watching the animal, which still squatted upon the davit, looking at them, Jack, in as few words as possible, roughly sketched the adventures of his companion and himself from the moment they stepped on board of the ill-fated vessel until the schooner's boat came alongside. The mate and two sailors listened to his singular narrative in unfeigned astonishment.

"Then it's not sailors ye are, at all, at all?" said the mate.

"No, sir."

"And yet ye carried that ould hooker through the late gale, a part of which we experienced ourselves, without goin' to the bottom? Faith, it's wonders ye are!"

"We couldn't have carried her much further, for she's making water fast," answered Jack. "I don't believe she'll swim two hours longer."

"I don't belave she will meself, from the look of her. It's lucky for ye thot we came up when we did, or ye'd have gone to the bottom in her. And now maybe ye'll be after tellin' me your names, and where ye hail from?"

"My name is Jack Ashmore, and my friend's is Bob Oakley. We hail from Clifton, near Boston."

"Then it's Americans ye are, the more power to your elbows! Sure, the skipper made out the British flag flyin' Jack-down from your fore-top."

"I cannot say just what the nationality of the vessel is, but I think she's English. Her name is The Singapoore, from Bombay, India."

"I don't wonder that baste, when he got loose, made Rome howl aboard the brig. But, faith, the officers might have killed him, I should think. Perhaps it's cowards they were when it came to a pinch. It's fortunate for ye thot the baste was so drunk when ye went aboard thot he fell into the hold, or he might have made mincemeat of ye. Now, then, me boyhees," to the sailors, "give way."

The boat was soon alongside the schooner, which the boys presently learned was the Molly Sewell, Captain George Hathaway, master, bound from New York to Nassau, in the Bahamas. The captain was standing near the wheel, with a fair young girl, his daughter, by his side. She appeared to be about sixteen years of age, and the boys thought she made a pretty picture with her unconfined golden hair floating in the breeze. Jack and Bob tumbled on board and walked aft to pay their respects to the skipper and to thank him for laying to and rescuing them from certain death. The captain was undoubtedly surprised to see only two boys come off from the dismantled brigantine, when he expected to have to receive on board her whole complement of officers and crew. His first thought was that the bulk of the brig's people had been washed overboard in the gale which had wrecked her, the tail-end of which the schooner had encountered herself.

Captain Hathaway was a fine, hearty, pleasant-featured man, tough and bronzed by years of service on the ocean highway, and the boys were

favorably impressed by his personality as he came forward to meet them.

"Well, my lads," he said, somewhat surprised by their genteel and unnautical appearance, "were you the only ones aboard yonder brig?"

"Yes, sir," replied Jack.

"What is that other thing on the bulwarks? I was examining it through the glass. It looked like an enormous specimen of the monkey species."

"It's an ape, sir, and a mighty fierce one."

"Indeed. What is the name of the brig? Where does she hail from, and where bound?"

Jack told him.

"Were you caught in the recent gale?"

"Yes, sir."

"The officers and crew—what became of them?"

"I don't know, sir."

"You don't know?" cried the captain, astonished at the answer. "What am I to understand from that?"

"If you will listen to our story you will understand," answered Jack, with a glance of admiration at the girl, who had come forward to her father's side.

"I shall be glad to hear what you have to say, my lad," said the skipper, while the mate was having the schooner put on her course again. "Didn't you bring any of your dunnage off with you?"

"No, sir. There was nothing belonging to us aboard the brig."

"Nothing belonging to you aboard of her?" said the captain, clearly much mystified.

"No, sir. Nothing at all. We did not belong to her."

Both the captain and his daughter regarded the boys as if they thought they were mild types of lunatics. That they didn't know what had become of the brig's company, that they had no property aboard of her, and asserted that they did not belong to her, seemed incomprehensible to them.

Before Jack began his story Captain Hathaway asked them their names. Jack answered for himself and Bob.

"So you are Americans, and hail from Boston?" said the skipper.

"Yes, sir."

The schooner was now passing close astern of the brigantine, which had by this time settled almost to her bends in the sea, and attention was diverted from the boys to the huge ape, now hopping about the poop, and chattering frantically, as if he had a suspicion of his approaching fate.

The girl shuddered as she gazed at the monstrous beast, and all aboard the schooner were agreed that he was the largest specimen of his kind they had ever seen.

The ape sprang up the ratlines and nimbly made his way to the maintop, where he squatted and glared down at the people on the Molly Sewell's deck. He seemed to recognize particularly the figures of Jack and Bob, and as the schooner left the brig astern he jumped around the top so as to keep them in sight. It was clear to the onlookers that half an hour would see the last of the sinking craft, so rapidly was she filling.

"Now, my lad, you may go on with your story," said the captain, turning to Jack as the fated brigantine fell astern. Ashmore lost no time in

doing so, beginning with their trip in the cat-boat to North Shoal and stating how they had been overtaken by the fog while at anchorage, and how in the early light of Sunday morning they had discovered and boarded the deserted brigantine heading in for Boston harbor.

Then he went on to state the condition they found the vessel's cabin and pantry in; their determination to sail the brig into port and claim salvage, but how their purpose was defeated by the sudden springing up of the gale which had carried them miles and miles away, they knew not whither, except that they had a general idea that it was to the south. Jack detailed their strenuous experience during the continuance of the gale, in which the craft had lost her top-hamper and, as it subsequently proved, had sprung a leak; and what they had done when the weather cleared up to the moment they had sighted the schooner heading in their direction.

Captain Hathaway, his daughter, and the mate, whose name was Terrence McSwiggle, who had already heard an outline of it from the boy, listened to Jack's story with no little wonder.

It amazed them to hear that two inexperienced youths could strip a 300-ton brig of all her canvas in time to meet the gale, and then were able to carry the vessel through the worst of it without sending her to the bottom. The girl gazed on the boys, particularly Jack, who chiefly attracted her eye, with evident admiration.

She was somewhat of a sailor herself, having sailed many voyages with her widowed father, and had picked up a good deal of practical knowledge of seamanship. She realized what the boys had been up against, and how gallantly they had met the issue and come through it with credit to themselves. Captain Hathaway expressed his sympathy with the boys and welcomed them to the hospitality of the schooner. He also complimented them on their nerve and pluck, and the seamanship they had displayed while aboard the brigantine.

"This is my daughter, Grace," he said introducing the girl to them, "and this is Mr. McSwiggle, my mate."

The boys bowed politely to each.

"We are bound to Nassau, the capital of New Providence, and the chief town in the Bahama Islands. If you wish to remain on board the schooner after we reach that place I'll bring you back with me to New York."

Jack thanked the captain and said they would both be glad to render any service in return that they were able to perform.

"Very well, my lad. You and your companion may prove useful in one way or another between this and the time I land you both in New York. It is somewhat singular that you two are the second ones I have picked up since leaving port. Late yesterday afternoon we ran across the wreck of a small sailboat with a native West Indian aboard. He was nearly dead from exhaustion, having been two nights and the better part of three days at sea without a particle of food. Most wonderful of all, he says he weathered the gale in that cockleshell in which we found him. It seems almost incredible. The only account of his situation we could get out of him was that he was blown off shore from the neighborhood of Boston, just like yourselves."

Jack looked at Bob, and the latter returned his look. The same unpleasant thought had occurred to each.

"There he is yonder, sunning himself near the galley pipe," said the skipper.

The boys turned around and looked.

Their suspicions were confirmed the moment their eyes rested on the other rescued chap. It was Quassamodo.

CHAPTER XII.—Grace Hathaway.

The black man, who had recognized them when they first came on board, was looking at them in a stealthy, cunning way that did not serve to reassure the boys. His presence aboard the boat was like a damper on their spirits. They knew that his feelings toward them were not of a friendly character. Neither of the boys betrayed the uneasiness they felt at the presence of this rascal aboard the schooner, nor did either enlighten the captain as to the fact of their having met the black man before under rather thrilling circumstances. It brought back to both, however, the thought of the treasure chart, which had slipped their minds during their stay aboard the brigantine. Perhaps they thought it a rather remarkable coincidence that they should meet Quassamodo again under the present unusual circumstances. The captain turned from them and went down into the small cabin to see what arrangements he could make to accommodate his unexpected visitors. There were four tiny rooms leading off the cabin proper, two on either side. One was occupied by Captain Hathaway, and the adjoining one by his daughter. On the other side, the mate had the room facing the captain's, while the next one was fitted up and used as a pantry.

Captain Hathaway decided that the boys would have to sleep on the pantry floor, as there was no other place for them. While he was below Miss Grace took charge of the boys. The three took seats on the rise of the cabin trunk, or roof, near the sailor who was at the wheel. In front of the wheel, where the steersman could look in at it, was the hooded binnacle containing the compass, and behind that, with just enough intervening space to reach it, was the companion stairs, brass-bound steps leading down into the cabin.

The cabin could also be reached at the opposite end, through a kind of scuttle and a short ladder.

This entrance was used by the cook in going to and from the galley, which was an annex to the forecabin.

"You boys are very fortunate in escaping from so many perils," said Grace, glancing demurely at Jack. "I'm afraid your parents are greatly worried over your disappearance."

"I have no parents to be worried about me," replied Jack, soberly. "I'm an orphan. It's different with Bob here. He has both a father and mother, and I have no doubt they are all broke up about him."

"You can bet they are," said Bob. "It's pretty tough on them, but there isn't any way of letting them know that we are safe."

"We'll reach Nassau in about two days," said Grace. "Then my father will send them a cable message assuring them of your safety."

"That will be first-rate," replied Bob, bright-

ening up. "Gee! How astonished they'll be to learn that I am in the Bahama Islands."

"Mr. Peaseley will be glad to hear that I am in the land of the living still," said Jack. "I'll have to let him take the pay for his boat we lost out of my wages."

"You'll only have to make good half the value of it. My father will pay the other half."

Jack then told Grace how he had lost his position in the store where he had been working since the preceding fall, and how he was about to go to work for the boatbuilder on the Monday of the present week.

"I'm afraid this adventure of ours will cost me the job, for Mr. Peaseley will have to hire another assistant," he said.

"Don't worry," replied Bob. "Mr. Peaseley will keep the place open for you when he learns that you will soon be back, and that it was through no fault of yours that you are away from Clifton."

"Say, Miss Grace," said Jack, suddenly changing the conversation, "did you ever hear of Turk's Island? It's somewhere down in the Caribbean Sea, I guess."

Bob glanced at his companion, for he remembered that the word "Turk's" was written in sympathetic ink on the treasure chart.

"There is such an island in the Bahama group," replied Grace. "It is one of the last in the bunch. My father will point it out to you on his chart."

"Then it isn't in the Caribbean Sea?" said Jack.

"No, it's in the Atlantic ocean, somewhere north of Hayti."

"It is some distance from Nassau, then?"

"Oh, yes. Several hundred miles to the southeast, I should think. The island of New Providence is near the center of the principal group, and is less than 200 miles southeast of Florida. It is quite a considerable distance from Hayti which is separated from the eastern end of Cuba by the Windward Passage, a great highway to the Caribbean Sea."

"I guess you are pretty familiar with the geography of the West Indies, aren't you?" said Jack.

"I've sailed several voyages, perhaps a dozen, with my father, between New York and Nassau, as well as other West Indian ports, and I have often amused myself studying the chart, until I know pretty nearly every island and port of any consequence in that locality," replied Grace, with a smile.

"Well, Bob and I are particularly interested in Turk's Island," said Jack.

"Why?"

"Well, it's something of a secret. Perhaps I'll tell you when we reach Nassau."

"I've never heard that there was anything very interesting about Turk's Island," remarked Grace. "Here comes my father. I'll ask him about it. Papa, Mr. Ashmore wants to know something about Turk's Island. I told him it was somewhere to the north of Hayti, one of the last of the Bahama group."

"It is. What do you want to know about the island, my lad? It's a bare and desolate bit of land, a few miles east of the Caicos group, and about 100 miles north of Hayti."

"Oh, I merely wanted to learn just where it is," replied Jack. "Is it inhabited?"

"It has a little population, except at the salt-raking season, but you can always find a few fishermen or turtlers down there."

Jack said that was all he wanted to know, and the conversation changed to other topics. In a little while the cook announced that dinner was ready, so Captain Hathaway invited his guests to step below and partake of it. During the meal Jack got on very friendly terms with Grace, who sat at the end of the table opposite her father. Mr. McSwiggle wasn't present, for he never left the deck until the captain came up, and he always ate his meals by himself. Captain Hathaway told the boys that they would have to put up a shakedown in the pantry, as that was the best accommodations he had to offer.

"That's all right, cap'n," replied Jack. "Bob and I don't mind a little thing like that. We've been roughing it pretty well for the last three days and we're getting accustomed to that sort of thing. This is really the first decent meal we have had since Saturday."

Grace laughed.

"I'm glad you both find it so good, though we don't live very high on board. We usually carry some poultry, alive, of course, in the longboat, but the gale carried the hencoop overboard this trip, which is very annoying, and consequently we have to rely wholly on canned meats, which I am not very partial to."

CHAPTER XIII.—The Theft of the Treasure Chart.

When Bob found that Jack and Grace were rather partial to each other's society he contented himself with the mate's company whenever that man was not too busy with his duties. Bob also kept a sharp eye on Quassamodo when the black man was on deck. On the morning following the boys' rescue, and while Jack and Grace were standing by the taffrail behind the steersmen, looking at the schooner's eddying wake and talking quite confidentially together, the West Indian approached Bob, who was sunning himself alongside the foremast. The black man grinned in a friendly way.

"Me wish Massa Oakley berry happy good mornin'," he said in an oily tone. Bob regarded him suspiciously.

"You've got an awful nerve to talk to me after the way you drew a knife on my friend, Jack, Saturday morning."

"Me berry sorry dat me no behave like gen'leman on dat 'casion. S'pose um 'cept berry humble 'pology, eh?"

"All right. Let it go at that," replied Bob, carelessly.

The black man grinned craftily.

"Now, Massa Oakley, s'pose um willin' to make lillie deal with Quassamodo?"

"Make a deal with you? What do you mean?"

"Me want dat piece of paper dat Massa Jack and um found in dat mast 'board de brig. Dat paper really my property and no good to anybody else."

"If it is your property how came it to be hidden in the mast where you couldn't find it?"

"Dat berry long story, Massa Oakley. Take

too much time to 'splain. S'pose um got dat paper me buy it."

"I don't think my friend Jack cares to sell that paper. He considers it as a great curiosity."

"Dat paper no 'portance to any one but Quassamodo. S'pose um get it me make berry handsome trade. What prevent Massa Oakley make five-pound note himself, eh?" and the black rascal winked his eye. "Me see um tomorrow."

With those words the West Indian glided away. Next day when the Molly Sewell was sailing through Providence Channel, between Great Abaco and the Eleuthera Islands, Quassamodo approached Bob again on the subject. Bob, however, sent him away with a flee in his ear, but the idea that there was a treasure hidden on a little island was not exactly reassuring. In the meantime Jack had made such progress in the girl's good graces that he showed her the treasure chart and explained it fully. He placed the paper in the sun till the heat brought the invisible writing out and then permitted her to read it. She was greatly interested and not a little excited at the idea that here was a treasure hidden on a little island only twelve miles from Turk's. While she was holding the paper in her hand a puff of wind blew it from her fingers and it came within an ace of going overboard. In fact it would have done so only for the low bulwark of the schooner against which it lodged. Grace recovered it quickly, but not before Jack had experienced quite a shock.

"I thought it was gone for good," he said.

"I should never have forgiven myself if it had gone overboard," she replied, with some concern. "If I were you I'm make a copy of it and let your friend keep it. Then, if by chance you should happen to lose the original, you would still be able to use the copy if the chance occurred for you to get to the Little Key."

After what had just happened Jack thought her advice good. He made a copy of the paper as it looked ordinarily, and on the back he wrote the words that were only visible when the original was heated. This duplicate he subsequently turned over to Bob, with the injunction to put it carefully away in an inner pocket. That afternoon the schooner sailed into the harbor of Nassau and came to anchor. Captain Hathaway went ashore in the boat, and he took Quassamodo with him, much to the satisfaction of the two boys. The skipper, before he returned, sent a cable message to Bob's father, assuring him of his son's safety, and Jack's as well. On the following day the Molly Sewell was hauled into one of the docks and the stevedores started in to unload her. Before they were half through Captain Hathaway came aboard and told the boys that, contrary to his expectations, he was not going to return to New York immediately.

"I have accepted a cargo for Porto Plata, Hayti," he said, "and will sail for the island immediately the consignment is aboard. As I suppose you lads will want to return to the United States at once I will advance you the money to pay your steamer fares and other expenses, and the money can be remitted to me, care of my shipping firm at New York."

This was unpleasant news to Jack, who had calculated on the companionship of Grace on the

homeward trip, and he hastened to communicate the intelligence to the girl.

"Why not go with the schooner to Hayti, Jack?" she said, earnestly.

"I should like nothing better," he replied, eagerly; "but I'm afraid your father wouldn't care to be bothered with Bob and I any longer than is necessary. He's already done a whole lot for us as it is, and we are very much obliged to him."

There was no doubt about Jack's willingness, and he said he would answer for Bob, so Grace interviewed her father and the matter was soon arranged to the satisfaction of all parties.

"Who knows," said the girl that evening after supper, "but you may find an opportunity to visit the Little Key of your treasure chart and hunt for the buried gold? Porto Plata is only 100 miles to the south of Turk's Island. If you would take my father into the secret I am almost sure he would sail the schooner to the Little Key and give you every assistance in searching for the treasure."

"I'll do it, Grace. You and I will tell him together on the run to Hayti."

About half-past eleven that night, while all was quiet on the wharf and aboard the schooner, a dark-skinned figure glided down the dock like a ghostly shadow and slipped on board of the Molly Sewell. He crouched upon the deck and listened intently. The sailor whose duty it was to keep watch between eight and midnight had just stepped down into the galley to light his pipe. The dark-skinned intruder had kept track of his movements, and as soon as his head disappeared below the deck he darted down the midship entrance into the cabin. He went directly to the pantry and tried the door. It was not locked, as he supposed. He entered the little room and saw Jack and Bob sleeping side by side on their mattress. Their garments were hanging around on nails. The intruder, who the reader will guess was Quassamodo, stealthily examined the garments he believed to be Ashmore's. Ere long he drew out the treasure chart he so eagerly desired to possess. Examining it by the moonlight that shone through a deadlight, he uttered a grunt of satisfaction, concealed the paper in his shirt, and crept from the room as silently as he had entered it. Then he left the schooner with the same caution as he had boarded her, made his way up the wharf and vanished into the obscurity beyond.

CHAPTER XIV.—After the Treasure.

Next day the Molly Sewell finished discharging her cargo, and the goods consigned to Porto Plata were brought down to the wharf to be stowed on board. It took about twenty-four hours to complete the loading, and as the tide served about ten o'clock, and it was a brilliant moonlight night, the schooner hauled out of her berth and started for Hayti via the southern passage between Exuma keys and the Tongue of the Ocean. Grace and the boys remained on deck until nearly midnight, admiring the beauty of

the seascape, and then turned in. When they appeared on deck in the morning the schooner was bowling along under the influence of a strong wind, with Great Exuma Island on the vessel's port quarter. After dinner Jack told Captain Hathaway he had something important to tell him, and they went on deck together, where they were presently joined by Grace. Then Jack told the skipper the story of the treasure chart. Captain Hathaway was rather astonished, and somewhat incredulous, but Grace assured him she herself had already seen the chart and read the secret writing.

"Well," said her father, "let me see it, and perhaps I may be able to tell you whether there is anything in it or not."

Jack put his hand in his inside pocket and felt for the paper, but it was not there. One after another he felt all his pockets, but to no purpose.

"It is gone," he finally said, with a blank look.

"Gone!" said the captain, and the word was echoed by his daughter.

"Yes, it's gone. I've lost it somehow. I never saw such hard luck."

"Never mind," said Grace, reassuringly. "You know that at my suggestion you made a copy of it and gave it to your friend Bob to keep. Go down and ask him for it. He's in the cabin talking to Mr. McSwiggle."

Jack obeyed her with alacrity. Bob was surprised to learn of the disappearance of the treasure chart, but he produced the copy, and Jack took it on deck to show it to the captain. Captain Hathaway read the abbreviations without any trouble.

"'Little Key, about four leagues southwest of Turk's Island. Latitude about 20 degrees, 51 minutes; longitude 71 degrees, 15 minutes.'"

The directions for locating the treasure he translated as follows:

"'Six fathoms east-southeast from high tide. Twenty fathoms west by south to palmetto tree. Dig five feet. Take bearings from north side of the island, about midway off the shore from end to end of the island. Bring five palmetto trees in line, grove with coffin bearing southeast.'"

The only unintelligible thing about it was the word "coffin."

"It can't refer to a real coffin," remarked the captain, "for that looks ridiculous to me as a landmark. It must mean some natural object that looks like a coffin—a rock of some size, for instance."

Jack agreed with the captain's idea, and then asked him if he thought well enough of the whole matter to undertake an investigation of the treasure trove after leaving Porto Plata. Captain Hathaway caressed his whiskers reflectively for a moment or two and then said he would consider the question and let him know later.

On the second day of their stay at Porto Plata Captain Hathaway told Jack that a profitable charter had been offered him to take a cargo to Kingston, Jamaica, but that he would have to wait three or four days in port for the stuff to arrive in town from the interior.

"Now, my lad, I have been thinking that this will give you an opportunity of visiting the Little Key in a way that I am about to suggest. There is a small schooner-yacht in the harbor belonging

to the head of the house with whom I am doing business. I can have the use of it during the time the Molly Sewell is detained here, and it will cost me nothing outside of the running expenses of the trip. I think that under Mr. McSwiggle's guidance you two boys will be able to run over to the latitude and longitude where the Little Key is supposed to be, about 75 miles north, and if you find it you will have a whole day or so to make your investigations. I have already spoken to the mate and he has promised to see you through. Are you ready to undertake the trip? For, if you are, it will be well for you to start at once—not later than this afternoon, in order to have as much time as possible to hunt up the Little Key, which is probably a very small island, not easy to be discovered at a distance."

"I'm ready to start off at once," replied Jack, enthusiastically. "and I'll guarantee that Bob will be just as eager to go as I am, as soon as I lay your proposition before him."

"Very well, then, I will consider the matter settled," said Captain Hathaway. "I will arrange for the use of the yacht at once, and Mr. McSwiggle will attend to the rest."

As soon as Jack conveyed the joyful news to Bob, his friend was simply tickled to death, and crazy to be off as soon as possible.

"But I want to go with you, too," said Grace, in an animated tone.

"I should be glad to have you come along," said Jack, "if your father will let you. The question is, will he?"

"I mean to tease him till he consents," she said resolutely, for her mind was set upon going to the Little Key with the mate and the boys.

Captain Wathaway at first would not hear of his daughter going on the trip. He said he had arranged to take her with him to a plantation in the interior of Hayti, where he had an invitation to stay three days. Grace, however, insisted that she preferred to go treasure hunting, and the captain finally reluctantly consented to let her go under the protection of his mate.

Mr. McSwiggle, having received his instructions, proceeded to fit the schooner-yacht out with the necessary supplies for the projected trip.

At three o'clock that afternoon the yacht sailed from Porto Plata with a merry and enthusiastic little party on board, the mate standing the first trick at the wheel.

CHAPTER XV.—The Treasure Chest.

The wind was light and the yacht made very slow progress toward its destination. That didn't greatly worry the party, as they had the whole night before them to make the run of seventy odd miles to the immediate vicinity of the Little Key, which they confidently hoped to sight soon after sunrise. The coast of Hayti had long since faded below the horizon behind them, and they were surrounded by a boundless waste of gently-swelling water. As the weather held perfectly fair, with scarcely more than a four-knot breeze, Bob was intrusted with the helm from eight to midnight, the rest turning in. At twelve o'clock

he called the mate, who put in four hours and then aroused Jack. In less than an hour the sun peeped above the watery horizon, and daylight came on as quickly as it faded out the evening before. There had been no change in the weather, and the barometer indicated a continuance of the same conditions. The lightness of the wind, which had now dropped to less than three knots, was the only feature that hinted at a possible failure of the expedition through a calm. While Grace was getting breakfast the mate and the boys maintained a sharp lookout. Nothing appeared until after the meal was finished, then Jack, who was standing forward, saw what looked to be a small, flat cloud lying a couple points off the bows. He called the mate's attention to it, and Mr. McSwiggle, after sighting it with his glass, pronounced it an island, and probably the one they were looking for. The yacht's course was altered a bit, and now all was excitement among the young people. In a short time all on board were able to distinguish a fringe of trees rising apparently from the water.

"How far off is it now, Mr. McSwiggle?" asked Jack.

"About five miles."

An hour later they were within less than a mile of the island, and the mate directed Jack to take soundings as they proceeded closer in. Ashmore found that the water shoaled rapidly, and kept Mr. McSwiggle informed of the depth shown by the lead line. The yacht, however, drew so little water that they were able to go within two hundred yards of the island before the mate ordered the anchor over.

"Hold on, Mr. McSwiggle, this is the southeast shore, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"We want to keep on around to the north shore and anchor about midway of the island."

The mate changed the vessel's course and she swept around the end of the key, and then proceeded along the north shore, coming to anchor in a spot indicated by Jack. Had the yacht turned the western, instead of the eastern end, her people would have seen a stout sloop anchored close in shore, and that circumstance would rather have disconcerted them.

"There's the five trees in a row with the grove," cried Bob, excitedly, pointing shoreward, as the yacht swung easily from her anchor.

All hands looked and saw the landmarks plainly enough.

"I think that settles all doubt as to the genuineness of the information we got from the treasure chart," said Jack, with satisfaction.

Bob and Grace fully agreed.

"It will soon be high tide, and our calculations we made at Porto Plata are substantially correct," said Jack. "So we'd better get ashore at once and get down to business."

The yawl was lowered, the various articles required were tossed into her, and then all hands left the yacht to look after herself and proceeded to the beach. The island was perhaps eight hundred feet long by three hundred feet wide. There was no surf, the sea splashing gently on the sand, so they landed without any difficulty at all, making the boat fast to the stump of a banana tree.

"Now," said Bob, after the implements had been tossed on the shore, "what shall we do first? Whereabouts along high tide do we begin from?"

"At a spot in line with the five palmettos, then the grove ought to bear southeast."

"What about the coffin? I don't see anything that looks like one?" said Bob.

"As there seems to be only one grove, I don't believe this reference to a coffin cuts much ice now. However, while I'm taking a sight at those trees you can run over to the grove and see what you can see."

Bob obeyed and soon disappeared among the trees of the grove. Jack got the trees in line and then called for the compass, which he placed on the ground at that spot. Then he took the piece of round hardwood, wound with knotted cord, which he had found in the mast with the treasure chart, from his pocket. This, he had already ascertained, carried exactly twenty fathoms of line, marked off by knots at every six feet. He unwound the cord and then waited patiently for the tide to reach its highest point on the beach.

"I wonder what keeps Bob so long?" he said to the mate.

"Sure, it's searchin' he is for the coffin, I suppose."

At length, when the flow of water seemed to have reached its limit, Jack inserted the peg into the sand in exact line with the five palmetto trees. Then he told the mate to take a sight with the compass east-southeast from the stake, while he counted off six fathoms of the line and walked off with it. When he held the line taut from the stake across the glass face of the compass the mate sighted and directed Jack when he had reached the proper spot, where he drove another stake in the sand. Mr. McSwiggle then replaced the original stake by another. Jack pulled the released stake toward him, stuck it beside the other and walked toward the first palmetto tree. The distance proved to be exactly the length of the whole line. The mate sighted the line to make sure, and found that it ran west by south.

"The spot to dig is where the two stakes are," said Jack, winding up the line and replacing it in his pocket.

They brought the shovels up and began to dig. Grace, who had been an interested observer of the preliminary proceedings, standing close by and watching them. Bob still continued absent and Jack, in his eagerness to uncover a hole to the depth of five feet, forgot all about him. He and the mate worked like Trojans, and the hole deepened rapidly. They got down three feet, and then paused to rest.

"Bob ought to show up and do his share of the work," remarked Jack, wiping the perspiration from his brow. "Bob! hi, Bob!" he shouted, but there was no answer. "He must have gone clean on across the island, or to the west end, on an exploring expedition. I don't see why he did so at this particular time."

Then they resumed digging. In a few minutes the mate's shovel struck a hard substance. He rapidly uncovered the object of resistance. It proved to be the end of a small sea chest.

"By George!" cried Jack, excitedly. "I believe we've struck the treasure!"

CHAPTER XVI.—The Treasure of Little Key

He jumped into the hole and tossed out the rest of the sand, uncovering the whole of the chest, which was bound with copper bands, covered with solid knobs, and looked to be quite old-fashioned. More digging had to be done around the chest before they could get at the handles to dislodge it. When they started to lift it from the hole they found it mighty heavy, and it took all their strength and ingenuity to land it on the surface. While they were thus engaged, with Grace looking on, deeply interested, a black man, who for some time had been observing their movements from the shelter of the grove, made his appearance and advanced stealthily toward them by a roundabout way. When the chest was pulled out of the hole, he was not a dozen feet away. Even then they did not observe him, for Mr. McSwiggle, noticing that the lock of the chest looked to be broken, struck it with the point of his shovel and part of it fell to the sand. Jack was standing in the hole when the mate seized the cover of the chest and flung it open. Both he and McSwiggle uttered an exclamation of satisfaction, while Grace bent forward and gave a little cry of delight, as the rays of the morning sun flashed upon hundreds of bright, yellow coins, piled pell-mell in the chest. At that moment the black man, none other than the West Indian himself, sprang at the girl, with open arms. He had been taken to the locality on a steamer, which accounted for his being there ahead of Jack's party.

The mate, hearing her shriek, turned around and saw the intruder for the first time, recognizing him as the chap the schooner had picked up at sea the day before the brigantine was sighted.

"Help! Help!" screamed Grace, as Quassamodo, seizing her in his arms, started for the underbrush.

"Drop her, you thafe of the wurruld!" roared McSwiggle, dashing after the negro.

The girl's screams brought Jack out of the hold in short order.

"It's that rascal Quassamodo," cried Jack, instantly joining in the pursuit.

The West Indian was fleet-footed, and, even handicapped as he was, outstripped them to the grove, into which he vanished. When Jack and Mr. McSwiggle came out on the other side of the grove Quassamodo was just pushing off from the beach in a boat with the girl. Jack and the mate dashed down to the water's edge and here they were blocked. The West Indian stopped his boat a few yards away and favored them with a triumphant grin.

"Massa Jack berry smart boy to get de best of Quassamodo, but now boot on um other leg. Me got Massa Oakley prisoner in um sloop," waving his arm toward the small vessel that lay moored about a dozen yards away. "Me also got Missie Hathaway, de cap'n's darter. Berry good. S'pose um like talk business, den me willin' to make um deal. Quassamodo want one-half treasure which um dig up. S'pose um 'gree to dat, and swear to keep um bargain, den me let gal and boy go. You no do dat, den me carry dem off and keep dem till um settle. How um like dat?"

Jack, with a cry of anger, sprang into the water and began to swim toward the boat. Quassamodo seized his oars and rowed a little further out. Then he drew a pistol from his belt and pointed it at the boy's head. Jack saw that the black man had him where the hair was short, so he reluctantly turned around and returned to the beach. Quassamodo then lay on his oars and watched the consultation that took place between Jack and the mate.

"There's only one thing to do, Mr. McSwiggle," said the boy. "That is to return to the yacht, slip the anchor, put up sail and chase that rascal. We can overhaul him hand over hand in our boat."

"Sure, that's what we'll do, faith," replied the mate.

The West Indian pulled in a little closer.

"What um ready to do, eh? No care to talk all day," he said, impatiently.

"Go to blazes!" roared the mate. "Come, Jack, we'll follow your plan. There's a rifle on board. We'll be able to pick the rascal off with it before he's got half a mile from the island."

They turned to retreat, when Quassamodo gave a yell of rage.

"Stop! Me shoot! Kill um and take all de treasure for umself if no settle."

As Jack and the mate were within easy range of the rascal's revolver, this threat created a fresh complication. They stopped short, undecided whether to take the risk of drawing the black man's fire or not. While matters were in this shape a head appeared above the side of the sloop. This head belonged to Bob Oakley. He had managed to free himself from the ropes with which Quassamodo had tied him, and then crawled out of the little cabin, if the box-like space in the forepart of the craft could be so denominated. Bob was not exactly a hero, even in his own estimation, but he could be plucky on occasions. He had overheard the conversation carried on chiefly by the black man, and perceiving that the wily West Indian appeared to have the best of the argument he began to consider how he could chip in and turn the tables. Looking cautiously over the side of the sloop he saw Grace Hathaway lying unconscious in the rowboat, with her captor threatening his friend Jack and the mate with his revolver. Noticing that the current around the island was in Quassamodo's direction, an idea struck him. He got out his jack-knife and, crawling forward, severed the rope by which the sloop was moored. The craft at once began to drift toward the rowboat unnoticed by the black man, whose eyes and attention were centered on Jack and McSwiggle. Bob then picked up one of the heavy stones with which the sloop was ballasted, and the moment he got within easy throwing distance of the rowboat he rose to his feet and fired it at Quassamodo. It took the black man on the back of the neck, and with a yell the rascal pitched forward into the sea. The rowboat began to drift shoreward, followed by the sloop. Quassamodo came to the surface and struck out for the boat in a weak way. The sloop, however, overtook him, and Bob, reaching down, seized him by the collar. Jack, in the meantime, had dashed into the water again, swam to the rowboat and helped it shoreward

just as Grace was recovering from her faint. The mate dashed in, caught the boat and lifted the girl ashore. Seeing that she was all right, he jumped into the boat and pushed off toward the sloop, to help Bob make a prisoner of the West Indian. The rascal was secured and bound, hand and foot, and then the mate told Jack to return Grace to where they had left the treasure chest, while he and Bob worked the sloop around the island by water.

"Oh, dear," said Grace, "what a fright I had!"

"Never mind," said Jack, putting his arm around her waist, a liberty she did not resent, "you're all right now. We've made a prisoner of the fellow, and he'll go to jail when we get back to Porto Plata."

They took their time getting back to the treasure ground, and during the walk Jack managed to get a certain promise from Grace that made him very happy. When the sloop arrived and was tied to yacht, Bob told Quassamodo soon after he entered the grove, and was then carried by the black aboard the sloop and left bound in the cabin. The treasure having been found, all hands were now anxious to return to Hayti. The chest was carried off to the yacht in the vawl and placed in the cabin. Then setting sail, with the sloop in tow, they steered southward. During the trip the contents of the treasure chest was counted and found to contain something over \$200,000 in Spanish gold coin, of a coinage around 1801-20. They reached Porto Plata early next morning and transferred the chest to the schooner, where it was exhibited to Captain Hathaway when he returned from his visit to the interior of the island. The gold was exchanged for several letters of credit on a New York city bank, of which Jack took one for \$100,000; Bob one for \$50,000; Captain Hathaway one for \$25,000; Mr. McSwiggle one for \$15,000, while the remaining \$12,000 was presented to Grace.

When the schooner sailed for Jamaica Quassamodo had been tried and sent to prison for a term of years. Nearly three weeks later the Molly Sewell reached New York.

Bob started for home alone, as Jack had accepted an invitation to remain in the metropolis with Grace and her father. Captain Hathaway decided to retire from active service, and the command of the schooner was given to Mr. McSwiggle. Jack also decided to remain indefinitely in New York, where he could see Grace as often as he wanted. He put his money in charge of a trust company to invest for him and took a position in the office of the shipping firm which owned the Molly Sewell. Three years after he bought out the senior partner and the firm became Taylor & Ashmore. The ink was hardly dry on the documents which made him a partner in the house than he was married to Grace Hathaway, and Bob Oakley came on from Clifton to act as his best man. Although Jack and Bob seldom meet, they correspond regularly, and neither can forget their experience as Boy Gold Hunters when they were After a Pirate's Treasure.

Next week's issue will contain "TRICKING THE TRADERS; or, A WALL STREET BOY'S GAME OF CHANCE."

BUCKSKIN BILL, THE COWBOY PRINCE

Or,

The Rough Riders of the Ranch

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER V.—(Continued)

Marks mounted his mustang, his face contorted with rage.

"Tim Drake!" he yelled, "why don't you arrest the ruffian?"

"Waal," drawled the sheriff, scratching his head, dubiously. "I can't see what charge yer kin bring agin him, sir. He gave you a putty good punch in the eye when yer called him a liar an' a swindler, an' I don't know as thar's any law in this yere State what gives me ther right to arrest him fer that. If yer called me them hard names, I'll be blamed if I wouldn't knock yer roof off myself, sir."

"Fool!" roared the lawyer. "You're a fine subject to uphold the law. I'll report your conduct to the governor. I'll——"

"Now you bust ahead an' don't yer git sassy ter me, or I'll give yer a smack in ther jaw!" growled Tim, getting mad, too.

The lawyer became so exasperated at this remark that he began to swear at the sheriff and, digging spurs in his horse, he dashed away, vowing all kinds of vengeance.

A roar of laughter escaped the sheriff, and he hastily mounted and dashed away after him, singing out as he went:

"So-long, Bill. Pay ther galoot termorrer so he can't git ther law on ye, d'yer understand?"

"He'll get his money," answered the boy, and a few moments later the sheriff and the lawyer vanished over the top of a hill.

When they were gone the boy turned to Denver Jack and said:

"Do you think we can trail those stolen steers?"

"Easy," was the eager reply. "It's my opinion as Jim Flood's gang got away with 'em some time durin' ther night, an' I reckon we kin overtake 'em if we gits right ter work, Bill."

"Call out the boys and tell them the news."

"No need ter do that. They're all mounted an' ready now."

"Then off we go. I'm glad mother wasn't up to witness all that Marks said, for it would have made her sick."

Away hurried the boy and, having secured Dandy, he rode around to the shed where the rough-riders were and exclaimed:

"Follow me, boys, and see if we can't run down our cattle. If we happen to come across those thieves again, show them no mercy. Wipe them off the map. They've got me into a most serious heap of trouble, and I want to put an end to their villainy."

"You bet!"

"Count on us!"

"We'll fix 'em!" responded the men, and at the word of command they all galloped away.

Corral No. 10 was far from the house, but they rode fast, and finally reached it, when Bill dismounted.

There wasn't a more expert trailer in the country than he, and it did not take him very long to find the tracks of the stolen steers, among which he discovered numerous horse hoof-prints.

"Here's the spot," said the boy, "and it looks as if there had been a large troop of horsemen to drive them away. It's the work of men used to cattle driving, too. Every man in Flood's gang has been a cow-puncher, and they must have been the guilty parties."

"Track 'em down, pard, an' we'll foller yer," answered Jack.

The boy thereupon started off and rapidly followed the trail which led them due west over the prairie.

"It's pretty plain that they ain't going to Four Flush," announced the boy at length. "I've always suspected that the cattle stolen from us was run down to Sandy Flats, and that mining camp lies in the direction in which we are now going."

"If that's ther case, they've follered ther ole Injun trail," said Jack, eagerly, "an' we kin make a short-cut an' head 'em off by switchin' off ter ther south'ard, Bill."

"All right; we'll try it," responded the boy, and he promptly changed his course, and they rode off in another direction.

After an hour's hard ride they went up on the crest of a hill, and the boy reined in and shouted, excitedly:

"There they are! There they are!"

He was pointing down into a hollow at the base of the hill, and when the rough-riders galloped up to where he stood they saw the stolen herd.

There were two thousand steers in the drove, and they were bunched and being driven along by a gang of mounted men, whom all hands recognized as Flood's gang.

Unfortunately, the cowboys were so delighted over their discovery that they let out a tremendous yell.

There was a strong wind blowing toward Bill's party, but that did not prevent the cattle thieves from hearing the shout, and some of them glanced around and saw the cowboys.

In a moment more they let the steers go on, gathered in a group, held a short conference, and then sped away.

"After them! They see us!" shouted Buckskin Bill, and he sent Dandy dashing down the slope at breakneck pace.

"Whoopee! Whoopee!" yelled the rough-riders, and away they galloped at a hot pace at his heels.

Every man began to get his weapons ready for use, for they now anticipated a running fight.

Flood's gang had become desperate, for they now saw that within a short time they were going to have a red-hot time of it with the rough-riders.

"Spread out!" the outlaw yelled at his men. "We can't keep our lead. In ten minutes they'll reach us, as their horses are fresher than ours. Our only chance is ter drive 'em back with fire. Let every man git ter work on ther prairie grass."

They understood what this meant and, having separated, they dismounted and began to kindle fires at intervals of every few yards apart.

Up leaped the flames and, fanned by the wind, they spread rapidly until a great wall of smoke and fire separated the outlaws from their pursuers.

That caused the steers to swerve, swing around and, terrified by the blaze, begin to retreat.

"Rein in! Rein in!" shouted Bill to his men. "The wind is driving that fire this way. If we keep on we will run right into the jaws of that blaze."

The prancing and sweating bronchos were pulled up, and the boy watched the conflagration a moment.

"There's a panic in the herd of cattle," he exclaimed at length. "The fire has terrified them. If the flames reach them I'll lose them, anyway. Boys, I've got to save those steers."

"It can't be done," replied Jack, shaking his head.

"But it must be done. If they are lost I'll be beggared. The Double X Ranch will be taken away from me by Marks. It's up to us to save them."

"But how?" asked Jack hopelessly.

"There's one chance!" cried the boy. "If we can keep the herd together and drive them to the Arroyo Frio, they can wade across the stream and the fire will die out on its edge."

"How far is ther Arroyo from here?"

"Two miles to the southeast."

"It's a desperate chance and a terrible risk, but we'll try it."

"Hurrah!" cried the boy. "Then come on. Ride up to the left flank of the herd and turn the leaders."

With a tremendous yell the gallant band of rough-riders dashed down the hill after their young boss and raced toward the bellowing herd.

CHAPTER VI.

Throwing The Lasso.

"Look out, thar, Bill, or you're a goner!" roared Jack, as they reached the base of the hill. "Here comes Flood an' his gang ter flank us, an' try ter prevent us from savin' them critters."

The boy glanced around and saw his enemy and several of his men coming at a gallop, and an angry light shone in Bill's eyes.

"He can't stop us!" he exclaimed. "Give them a volley, boys!"

The cowboys let the shots go, and the outlaws fired back.

Several of Flood's men were wounded, and as they swung off to the eastward, evidently afraid to keep it up, Bill shouted:

"I'm going to capture Flood alive if I can!"

"Hey!" yelled Jack, as the young rancher dashed away after the rascal. "Come back here, boss, or they'll plug yer!"

But Bill paid no heed.

"Get along, Dandy!" he exclaimed to his horse. "We can easily overhaul that wretch now."

Just then Flood turned in the saddle and shot

back at him, the whistling bullet flying within an inch of Bill's face.

"Take that!" yelled the outlaw, viciously.

"You missed," Bill answered, as his own Winchester flew to his shoulder, "and that is something I seldom ever do. This one ought to fix you."

Crack! went the boy's weapon.

The ball hit Flood's rifle and knocked it from his hand, and he gave utterance to a wild cry of rage, for he had to dash on, leaving the weapon behind him.

Quick as lightning Bill slung his rifle over his back and seized the coiled lariat from his saddle pommel.

"Stop where you are, Jim Flood," he yelled, warningly, to the flying outlaw. "Rein in or, by heavens! I'll bring you up with a short turn."

A volley of swearing was the answer, and Bill began to whirl the coils of the lasso around his head, as he panted:

"Oh Dandy, get along, boy!"

The big black stallion made a magnificent spurt, and Flood glanced back with an anxious look. His bony mustang was being lashed with the end of the rein, and the outlaw savagely dug the rowels of his cruel spurs into the sweating animal's flanks.

But the stallion steadily gained.

Suddenly Bill rose in the stirrups and let the lasso fly. Through the air shot the coils, and the noose settled down over Flood's neck.

"Whoa!" shouted the young cowboy.

The stallion paused, and the sudden jerk pulled the outlaw from his saddle.

"Help! Help!" yelled Flood in hoarse, choking tones.

His men heard him, saw his plight, and came dashing back.

"Halt!" shouted Bill. "If you advance another step or fire a shot, I'll start my horse and drag him to his death!"

The gang reined in.

But Flood, at the moment Bill turned his glance on the men, whipped out his bowie and slashed the lasso in two.

Out came one of Bill's pistols, but before he could use it Flood sprang behind his horse.

The gang now began to shoot at the boy, and although he returned their fire neither side scored.

Just then Jack and some of the rough-riders came galloping toward the spot, and Flood hastily mounted and, lying flat on his mustang's neck, galloped away.

A couple of shots from Bill missed him, and a moment later the gang disappeared in a hollow.

Seeing it was useless to chase Flood any further just then, as the fire was swiftly gaining, Bill galloped back to his cowboys, and Jack shouted:

"Hurry up, boss, or the fire will baffle us yet!"

"Don't you worry about that," retorted Bill, as he shot a keen glance at the flames. "If we work lively we'll get them away before it reaches us."

"Hey, thar, boys, swing them leaders around!" bawled Jack to his men. "Don't let 'em scatter now, or, blast 'em, they'll throw off ther lull herd."

(To be continued)

GOOD READING

WHEN RAIN WAS WORTH \$7 A POUND

Rain water at \$7 a pound may seem a bit high in price, but it was worth that much to the dirigible Los Angeles on her return from Bermuda to the United States. A heavy storm was encountered during the voyage, and about 2,000 pounds of water accumulated on the huge envelope. On its arrival at the Lakehurst hangar, this extra ballast permitted the ship to be brought to the ground without releasing any of the helium. The estimated value of the gas thus saved was \$14,000, making the rain water worth \$7 a pound.

INTERESTING ITEMS

The natives of the Andaman Islands, the smallest people in the world, average 3 feet 11 inches in height and less than 70 pounds in weight.

A Chinaman is compelled by the law of his country to leave his possessions to his male children. He can make no exception in favor of any one.

Chiefly for the use of naturalists is a new cane containing a compass, double lens, thermometer, sand glass, knife blade and kettle to hold specimens of flowers or insects.

An elephant's foot takes longer to cook than any other meat. To make it tender it must be boiled for thirty-six hours.

Any person in a Japanese theatre who chooses to pay a small extra fee is allowed to stand up during the performance, and those sitting behind him are quite helpless unless they choose to follow his example.

The hot spot district of New Zealand is called "wonderland of Australasia." It is said to be to Maoriland what the Yellowstone Park and Hot Springs of Arkansas are to the United States. Maori women have no need to light a fire to cook meals. An old can or pail sunk in hot mud or set on a steam jet answers admirably for a boiling pot or oven.

In Sweden it is the custom for a bride to fill her pockets with bread, which she dispenses to every one she meets on her way to the church. Every piece she thus disposes of averts, as she believes, a misfortune.

Many of the natives in Northern China are dressed in dogskin. There are several establishments where dogs of a peculiar breed are bred for their skins. They are killed when eight months old.

At the Chequers inn at Slapstones, near Os-motherly, England, is a fire which for more than a century has never been allowed to go out. The place is a quaint little building, to which many visitors resort on account of its never extinguished fire and the turf cakes baked upon its hearth. It has been kept by members of one family for over a hundred years.

In Germany and other parts of the continent cherry trees are commonly planted by the roadside. The road from Brunn to Ormutz, sixty miles in length, is bordered with cherry trees. This useful kind of hedgerow has many parallels in Austria. Any passenger may eat of the fruit

of these trees, except those few about which the owner has bound a wisp of straw in token of reservation. The sign is generally respected.

BEWARE THE FAKE INVENTOR

Gullibility of the investing public and lack of scientific knowledge on the part of would-be inventors cost the American public millions of dollars annually, according to a survey just completed by the Bureau of Standards.

This is one of the underlying reasons for the transfer of the United States Patent Office from the Interior Department to the Department of Commerce under Herbert Hoover. Mr. Hoover and his department are in closer touch with the business world, and consequently can afford more protection to business men concerning "inventions."

The Government survey showed that there are two principal classes of inventions, both of which are highly costly to the public. In the first class the "inventor" is a crook, pure and simple, out to prey on the public. In other cases inventions are devised by conscientious experimenters so ignorant of scientific principles that their ideas are useless. Perpetual motion devices are the favorite goals both of the crooked and conscientious inventors, bureau officials said. Most of the perpetual motion schemes submitted to the Government laboratory amount to nothing more than devices of such confused construction that the operation of natural laws is not obvious.

Thousands of inventions are submitted to the bureau for approval. Many of them in which large sums have been lost are rank absurdities from a scientific standpoint, according to J. E. Randolph of the Bureau of Standards.

Occasionally "inventors" try to deceive even the Government scientists. Devices for decreasing gasoline consumption are frequently submitted, some based on sound principles and others pure fakes.

"One of the most extravagant was brought to us for investigation at the instigation of a man who planned to put some money into it," Mr. Randolph said. "The inventor said he could make fifty miles on a quart of gasoline. We suggested a drive to Frederick, Md., a distance of ninety miles. The inventor raised a foolish objection, so we examined his car. We found two hidden tanks, filled with gasoline, with hidden pipes connecting them to the carbureter."

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FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

NEW YORK, JULY 17, 1925

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

ITALY COUNTS ITS THEATRES

Statistics recently made public show that only sixteen out of every one hundred townships in Italy have theatres. In the entire country, it was shown that 1,362 townships possess playhouses.

BRAZILIAN TOPAZ WEIGHS 90 LBS

A white Brazilian topaz that weighs ninety pounds has recently been placed on view in the Field Museum in Chicago. Lapidaries estimate that it would make at least 100,000 stones of one carat each.

TRY IT

Mix 100 white marbles with 100 black ones. Put three empty dishes alongside. Now blindfold yourself and pick up the marbles in pairs. Ask an assistant to place pairs of marbles in one bowl if both happen to be black; in another if they are black and white, and in a third, if both are white. You will doubtless be surprised to find that at the end of the experiment, there will be twenty-five pairs of white, twenty-five pairs of black, and fifty pairs of black and white mixed. This experiment, science assures us, never fails. It illustrates graphically Mendel's law of heredity, showing the distribution of qualities among succeeding generations coming from a single pair of parents, one set of qualities represented by black, the other by white.

OFF TO HUNT PIRATE GOLD

A rakish 26-foot craft, the *Stingaree*, left Toronto June 9 on a search for the much-sought pirate gold on Cocos Island.

William John Beach, ever since he first read "Treasure Island," has nursed this ambition.

The crew consists of Mr. Beach, his wife and five-year-old son.

Cocos Island is 500 miles from the Pacific end of the Panama Canal. The gold which lures the treasure hunters is said to be worth \$20,000,000.

Mr. Beach has been working with electrical experts for months perfecting an "ear for gold," an instrument which he declares will record the presence of loose gold if it is within digging distance of the surface of the earth.

UNCLE SAM'S NEW ISLAND

Swain's Island is going to belong to some one at last. It has enjoyed the distinction for more than eighty years of not having been annexed by any of the great powers. But its days of single blessedness are over, for Congress passed in March a resolution to bring it under the sovereignty and laws of the United States.

Our newest bit of territory is one of the smallest that we have ever annexed. Its minuteness and its remoteness help to explain how it came to escape so long the eyes of statesmen in days when charts were scanned closely for spots of dry land on which to run up flags. It lies some 200 miles north of Apia, the chief island of the Samoan group. Its area with a little readjustment could just about be fitted within the walls of Central Park. The readjustment would be necessary for the reason that the island is almost round in contour, after the manner of coral atolls.

LAUGHS

Shoe Clerk—Are you being waited on, ma'am?
Fair Customer—No; I want a pair of walking shoes. Shoe Clerk—What price and size, ma'am?
Fair Customer (rather loudly)—Threes! Shoe Clerk—Threes? Fair Customer (in a low tone)—Yes, three dollars. Size 6, D.

"Pa," said little Sammy, "you are a humorist because you have got a humorous vein, ain't you?"
"W-Why, yes," retorted Mr. Manhasset, wearily, "I suppose so." "Well," persisted little Sammy, eagerly, "if you had had a jugular vein would you have been a juggler?"

"Do you believe in the power of mind over matter?" asked the mystical man. "No," answered the practical friend. "I believe in the power of matter over mind. I have known a dull, insensate tack hammer by one swift rap on the thumb to make a man say things that he had not thought of for years."

Mamma—Now, Freddy, mind what I say, I don't want you to go over into the next garden to play with that Binks boy; he's very rude. Freddy (heard a few moments afterward calling over the wall)—I say, Binks, ma says I'm not to go in your garden because you're rude; but you come into my garden—I ain't rude."

Buyer—Look here, you! You said this horse was sound and kind and free from tricks. The first day I drove him he balked a dozen times, and he's as bad to-day. Dealer—Um—you've been wondering if I cheated you, maybe? "Yes, I have." "And the first time you drove the horse you sort o' wondered if he hadn't some tricks, didn't you?" "Of course." "And you kept saying to yourself, 'I wonder if that there horse will balk, maybe?'" "Probably." "And you had your mind on it a good deal, most like?" "That's true." "That's wot's the matter. You've hypnotized him. See?"

POINTS OF INTEREST

SHOWER-BATH SUIT PROTECTS FIREMEN
FROM HEAT

One of the most unusual costumes for firemen ever devised was tested out recently in Germany, says *Popular Science*. The fire fighter wears waterproof overalls and gloves, but the remarkable part of the outfit is a water-spouting helmet. Water falling in a circle around the wearer is said to protect him from heat that otherwise would be unbearable, thus enabling him to fight fires at closer quarters.

SIPPING STRAW'S SIRE IS FOUND

The National Geographic Society claims to have found the grandfather of the straw through which Americans sip sodas and other soft drinks. It is the "drinking stick" of Jubaland, on the East African coast.

Yak trees of Jubaland have cavities in their trunks in which rain-water collects and is preserved for months. It is impossible to dip the water out, so the natives and travelers carry "drinking sticks" to sip through. The "drinking stick" is two feet long, half an inch in diameter and has a hollow center as big as a pencil.

WHAT PEOPLE LEAVE ON TRAINS

The number of forgotten articles left lying around railroad stations and in trains has become so great that special departments have been established for their care and disposal. The variety includes almost everything from books to live animals. One Eastern system collected more than 10,000 pieces of lost property in a year from their suburban trains. Of these 5,115 were returned to the owners. In this collection were 1,200 umbrellas, 300 watches, 400 bunches of keys and 600 rubber shoes. A total of \$1,486.59 was found, of which \$500 was the largest single amount. At the end of a twelve-month period all unclaimed matter is sold at auction. Among such a lot were an artificial arm, a cork leg and a glass eye.

ANTS EAT OAK FLOORS IN STATE OF
KANSAS

Termes, a small white creature that resembles an ant, is bringing destruction to several Salina homes again this spring by eating the floors and timbers of the foundations, says *The Topeka Daily Capital*. At the home of C. P. Peck the ants ate through solid oak flooring, weakening the boards so that one stepping on the weakened places fell through the floor. The oak flooring was laid over a pine lining. The ants do not bother the pine but materially damage the oak flooring.

At the home of C. F. McAdams, vice-president of the National Bank of America, the ants have so badly damaged the floor of the front porch that a new floor will have to be laid. The Kansas State Agricultural College has recommended a remedy which will be tried by both Peck and McAdams. In the past two years these ants have damaged several homes in Salina so badly that parts of the houses had to be reconstructed.

A DESCRIPTION OF SWAIN ISLAND.

The entire population of Swain's does not much exceed the number of policemen guarding the park on a spring evening. Yet the population has enjoyed a relatively enormous increase in recent years. It is said now to have some seventy inhabitants. At the time of its discovery and for a number of years after it was discovered it had no inhabitants at all.

The *Peacock* and the *Flying Fish*, part of the squadron of the United States Exploring Expedition under Commodore Wilkes, sought in January, 1841, for signs of an island reported by the sixteenth century Spanish navigator Quiros and named by him Gente Hermosa, or the Isle of Comely People. Captain Hudson, who commanded the two vessels, had word also from a whaler of land sighted thereabout. Hudson found an island, but as it had on it no inhabitants, handsome or otherwise, that he could see and as its position was not that given by the old navigator he gave it the name of Swain, the whaler who had reported it. And so it happens that the latest American territorial possession was first located and surveyed by one American and named after another.

Hudson's sailors tried to land on the breaker-swept beach. They found that the island had no cove to render landing safe or easy. A heavy surf was breaking impartially along all parts of the shore. Small boats sent to try to reach the land could not make it, and one of them was cast on one of the outer reefs. Though the party did not land, the entire lack of boats, huts, fires or any other sign of human presence made it plain enough that there was nobody home—and perhaps never had been.

The isle as it then was seemed quite ready for occupancy. It had a rich growth of cocoanut and pandanus trees, and flocks of pigeons circled over the treetops.

English maps include Swain's under one or another of its several variant names, in the Tokelau group, and put a ring around the whole aggregation, within which runs the label "British." It does not appear, however, that Britain has ever made any official assertion of sovereignty over Swain's Island in particular. The better-known islets of the Tokelau group are but little larger than Swain's and they lie far to the north of it. About 130 miles of open ocean separates it from Fakaofa, the nearest land under distinctly British rule.

Men with a fancy to possess islands of their own are not uncommon in the Pacific. Though no Government sought this little speck of territory, it is natural that an individual finally found it out. Others followed. The reputed owner of the island, Alexander Jennings, is an American citizen.

The United States will gain nothing by its new acquisition, but it will assure law and order to a handful of people too few to support a government of their own and too numerous by several dozen to get along permanently without regular authority to appeal to to keep their relations in order.

FROM ALL POINTS

HEART MADE OF GLASS

A heart of glass which beats by the aid of a little electric motor and sends a red fluid coursing through glass arteries has been placed on exhibition in Dresden, Germany. The apparatus is approximately the size of a human heart and was intended to be of special interest for medical students to illustrate the functions of that organ.

THE WORLD'S OLDEST BUSH

According to Dr. Edgar T. Wherry of the Department of Agriculture, a box huckleberry bush in Perry County, Pa., is the oldest bush in the world. This remarkable bush is a mile and a quarter long and covers the entire side of a hill. Doctor Wherry estimates that it grows six inches a year. Taking that as a basis, the plant must be something like 12,000 years old.

WHAT IT COSTS TO MAKE A DOLLAR

According to Charles S. Dewey, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, it costs one and seven-tenths cents to print a dollar bill and it has a very short life. But a silver dollar can be minted for one cent and it lasts indefinitely. This is said to be one of the reasons for the Government's desire to put the metal coins into circulation. It is estimated that 40,000,000 silver dollars, replacing that many paper bills, would save the Government \$1,000,000 a year.

TOOTHBRUSHES THAT GROW ON TREES

Stems from a West Indian tree that is rich in saponin, a soapy chemical that cleanses the teeth, are used by the natives instead of factory-made brushes in many parts of the islands. They are cut in sections four or five inches long, and when the end is moistened and rubbed on the teeth, the fibrous wood becomes frayed and, at the same time, a profuse lather is produced. The brushes are sold in the native market at three for a cent. When dried and ground, the wood forms a powder which is said to be good for cleaning dirty fabrics, as it contains no substance injurious to them.

SEA GULLS FLY AROUND WORLD

That gulls and terns inhabiting the Great Lakes region scatter over a wide range during their migratory flights has been indicated by a check-up kept on the banded birds, according to William I. Lyon of the Inland Bird Association, who marks more than 3,500 of the fowl yearly in an effort to learn their length of life, mating habits and traveling ability. Even those reared in the same neighborhood of the Northern climes have been found to follow different routes on their winter flights. A pair of terns, released after capture and banding in Northern Lake Michigan, were trapped in Colombia, and another specimen, taken along the Niger River in Africa, bore a marker which had been attached to it on the coast of Maine. Others identified by bands were found to have traveled from the Great Lakes to points in Georgia, Florida and Texas.

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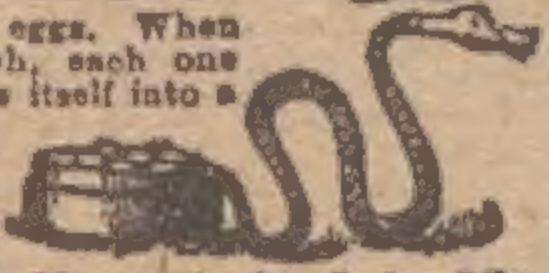
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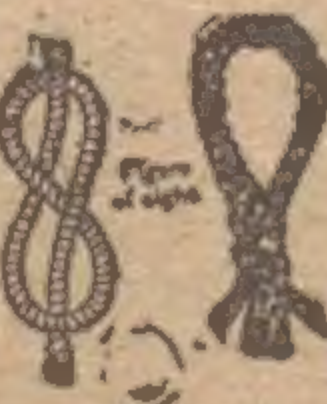
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